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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you practice recycling at home?

Let your voice be heard!
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to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Adopt-a-Bin
Mariana Islands Nature Alliance unveils it first recycling and trash bins at Obyan Beach.

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Suicide Blasts
Two suicide bombers blew themselves up on Moscow's subway system, killing at least 35.

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Last Song
Singing was the last thing on Miley Cyrus' mind in "The Last Song."

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IT&E to build new cell site on Rota to cover 'dead spot' **PAGE 5**

$137M budget for FY 2011 by April 1 deadline—Fitial

» Lawmaker pre-files bill cutting FY 2010 budget by additional 5 percent
» Senate panel not voting on austerity bill without holding public hearings first

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said he will submit a $137 million budget plan for Fiscal Year 2011 by the April 1 deadline.

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WATERLINE PROJECT
Roger Guamo, 60, of Tropex Garden Co. Ltd., paints a project sign along Beach Road in Garapan yesterday afternoon. Tropex Garden bagged a contract for a central Garapan waterline replacement project, which is expected to be completed by Sept. 14, 2010.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

"The court finds itself without any power to enforce [Tang's] removal without a valid passport."
—Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona

Convicted woman trapped on Saipan

» Chinese govt refuses to renew her passport
» Woman unable to be deported, jobless

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Chinese woman who was convicted of "ice" possession in February 2008 and told to leave the CNMI is still on Saipan and is jobless after her govern-

See CONVICTED on Page 4

Check your mailbox for Census forms

Census 2010

The CNMI Local Census Office announces the delivery of 8,000 CNMI Census forms to all U.S. Post Office box holders in the CNMI.

The second group of 2010 CNMI Census Forms will be delivered to all private mailbox customers soon.

See story on Page 9

MHS wins Spring Camp's cadet, academic challenges

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER REPORTER

Marianas High School emerged victorious in the Public School System's JROTC Spring Camp after it went home with two of the four top awards in the highly spirited competition that ended Sunday.

A total of 169 cadets representing Rota, Saipan Southern, Marianas, Tinian, and Kagman high schools

See MHS on Page 4

A team of cadets performs one of the activities in the five-day JROTC leadership encampments on island.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Local

TO COMBAT CRIMES PERPETRATED BY JUVENILES

DPS in full force to monitor curfew violators

The Department of Public Safety said yesterday that police officers will be out in full force to enforce the curfew law on Saipan and fight crimes perpetrated by juveniles.

At the instruction of DPS deputy commissioner Ambrosio T. Ogumoro, the department's Crime Prevention Unit, Juvenile Task Force, Patrol, and Traffic sections will be going out to monitor and enforce the CNMI curfew law, according to DPS spokesman Eric F. David.

"This operation will commence immediately," David said.

From Monday to Thursday, minors can go out until 10pm, while from Friday through Sunday they can go out until 11pm.

"Any persons under the age of 18 caught after these hours will be apprehended. Parents or guardians will be liable for their actions and may be fined $750 or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days," David said.

However, if the juveniles are accompanied by their parents or guardians during the curfew hours, they will not be cited for violation, he said.

The DPS spokesman noted that juveniles usually engage in deviant behavior after curfew hours.

"Some of the crimes involving juveniles include minors consuming alcohol, drag racing, burglaries and copper wire theft cases," he said.

This DPS curfew operation, David said, will improve the department's awareness of areas commonly targeted by juveniles.

"[It will also] enhance our enforcement techniques and resources to effectively carry out the enforcement arms of this effort," David said. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Man in alleged forged $200M T-bond taken back to custody

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court remanded into the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service yesterday a man who is facing charges of manufacturing a forged $200 million treasury bond that a CNMI insurance company showed the CNMI government as proof of sufficient capital.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David A. Wiseman granted assistant U.S. attorney Kirk Schuler's motion to keep Kent Sebastian Robinson in detention.

Wiseman continued the arraignment to April 1, 2010 at 9:30am. He named Timothy Bellas as the interim court-appointed counsel.

Robinson told the court that he plans to represent himself, but then stated he wants to talk to Bellas.

He said he doesn't want an attorney appointed to him but Wiseman strongly urged him not to try and defend himself, considering the seriousness of the case.

The U.S. government brought Robinson from the District of Columbia to Saipan to face charges of manufacturing the forged $200 million treasury bond.

The indictment charged Robinson with fraudulent uttering of a private security, making and uttering of a fictitious obligation, and mail fraud.

According to the indictment, Robinson made a counterfeited and forged document—a Secured Funding and Offset Bond—purportedly registered with the U.S. Department of Treasury on Dec. 19, 2008.

The "Offset Bond," which declared a value of $200 million, was paid to the order of Oceania Insurance Corp., a company registered in the CNMI.

The "Offset Bond" falsely purported to be offset by a "deposit private offset with the U.S. Department of Treasury."

On Dec. 19, 2008, Robinson sent the "Offset Bond" to Oceania, which submitted it to the CNMI Insurance Commissioner.

The defendant's intent, the indictment said, was to deceive Oceania, and the CNMI government.

Attention
Cancer Survivors!

The Comprehensive Cancer Control Program along with the Commonwealth Cancer Association would like to invite you to attend a Cancer Survivors Meeting on Tuesday, March 30, 2010 at 6:00pm at the Hyatt, Chamolinian Room

Please RSVP by calling the Comprehensive Cancer Control Program at tel. 236-8728 or the Commonwealth Cancer Association at tel. 682-0050.

This ad is brought to you by the Department of Public Health Comprehensive Cancer Control Program with 100% funding from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Kagman meeting on poker parlors

The Kagman Komunidat Association is urging all Kagman residents to attend a public meeting on poker parlors within Kagman village. The purpose of the public meeting is to determine whether poker parlors should be allowed to remain in Kagman or be banned. Meeting will be at the Kagman Community Center on Tuesday, March 30, at 7pm. E-mail kagmankomunidatassociation@gmail.com for more info.

Kagman Neighborhood Watch meeting

The Kagman Komunidat Association is urging all Kagman residents to attend the neighborhood watch meeting to be held at Kagman High School on Wednesday, March 31, at 6pm. Neighborhood watch is meant to prevent and decrease criminal activity in villages. ***(PR)***

MMAC sets team captains' meeting

The 2010 Marianas March Against Cancer committee will be holding a team captains' meeting tomorrow, March 31, at 5:30pm in the Napu Room of the Pacific Islands Club. Registration and luminary deadlines will be discussed along with any other important information that may come up. Public comments will be included in the agenda. For more information, contact Reina Camacho at 285-7677 or via email at reinacamacho@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Tourism Tuesday

A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority

Tourism is everybody's business.

Sports Tourism By the Numbers

Numerous travel industry partners and government agencies are joining the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) in its promotion of the Northern Mariana Islands as a sports tourism destination, a push that was highlighted this month with three Signature Events: Saipan Marathon, XTERRA Saipan Championship, and Tagaman. Here's a look at the impact of this growing public-private partnership, by the numbers:

Saipan Marathon
- **3** international media outlets from Japan assisted by MVA to cover the event
- **500** runners from Japan
- **597** total entrants
- **$58,000** worth of extra media exposure.
- **988,259** readers of Running Style and Nikkan Sports Shimbun
- **16,000,000** page views per month on Elle Online

XTERRA Saipan Championship
- **10** professionals competing
- **10** countries and island entities represented
- **72** entrants

Tagaman Triathlon
- **10** countries and island entities represented
- **124** entrants

Through the efforts of tourism partners, government agencies, and private groups and individuals, sports tourism continues to count—and grow—in the Northern Marianas.

HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

PSS: Nearly a third of non-HQTs are new teachers

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Nearly a third of the Public School System's non-highly qualified teachers are new classroom educators, according to a report PSS presented Thursday to the Board of Education's Committee on Fiscal and Personnel Affairs.

The March 25 report states that a total of 163 classroom teachers have yet to pass the Praxis exams. Of this number, 49 are new hires, with less than two years teaching experience. This translates to 30 percent of the total.

Of the 49 new teachers, 17 have passed Praxis I while five have passed Praxis II. A total of 27 new teachers need to pass both tests.

Non-HQTs with more than two years teaching experience totaled 28—or 17 percent of the total non-HQT figure. Five have passed Praxis I, one has passed Praxis II, and 22 need to pass both exams.

The Human Resource Office report also showed that 33 non-HQTs are long-time teachers with more than seven years experience. Five have passed Praxis I, three passed Praxis II, and 25 need to pass both Praxis tests. Percentage-wise, these educators account for 20 percent of the 163 total non-HQTs at PSS.

The same report also indicates that there are 29 non-HQTs who have more than 10 years teaching experience—18 percent of the total number. Of these 29, seven have passed Praxis I; two passed Praxis II; and 20 need to pass both tests.

PSS also has 24 non-HQT teachers with more than five years teaching experience: Three have passed Praxis I, three have passed Praxis II, while 18 need to pass both tests.

Overall, PSS has a total of 14 non-HQTs that need to pass Praxis I; 37 that need to pass Praxis II; and 112 that must pass both Praxis I and II.

To date, PSS has 408 highly qualified teachers, which makes up 71 percent of the total teacher population.

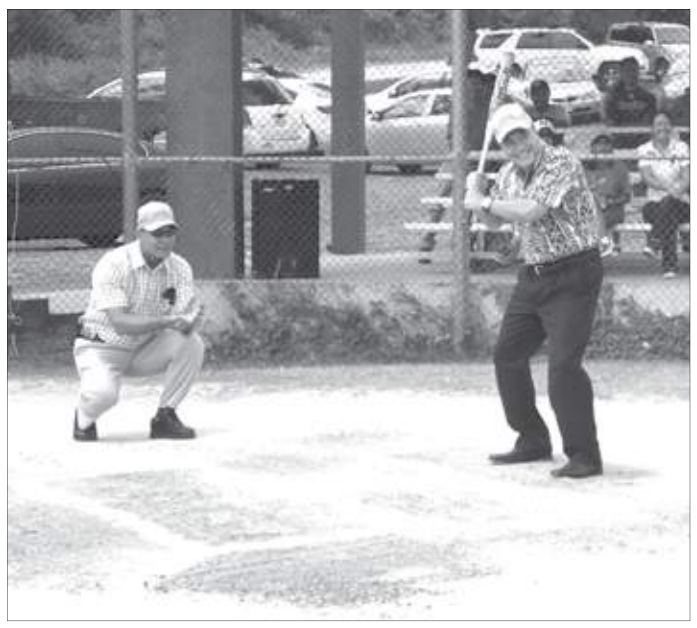
Of the 71 percent, 43 percent or 244 teachers have bachelor's degrees; 159 teachers or 28 percent have master's degrees; while five (1 percent) have doctorate degrees.

Among non-HQTs, 144 teachers have bachelor's degrees while 19 have master's degree.

To encourage and motivate all its teachers to become highly qualified, PSS offers a competitive salary scheme that ranges from $28,000 to a maximum of $47,000 per annum.

PSS also brings in experts from off-island to help and assist teachers with the Praxis requirements.

The U.S. Department of Education has set July 2011 as the deadline for PSS to comply with the highly qualified teachers mandate required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.



Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho prepares to swing at Gov. Fitial's first pitch while CNMI Customs director Jesus Muña serves as catcher.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

INAUGURAL PITCH
Gov. Benigno R. Fitial throws the inaugural pitch for the 2010 CNMI-Guahan-Belau Law Enforcement Goodwill Softball Tournament held on March 26-27 at the Capital Hill ballpark.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Recruiter in human smuggling case pleads guilty

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Jian Li, the person who reportedly recruited 22 Chinese nationals to smuggle them from Saipan to Guam on a boat, entered a guilty plea yesterday.

The 32-year-old Li signed a plea agreement with the U.S. government. He pleaded guilty to one count of attempting to bring an alien to the U.S. The offense carries a maximum penalty of one year in prison.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David A. Wiseman accepted Li's change of plea and set the sentencing for May 28, 2010 at 9am.

Wiseman directed the U.S. Probation Office to prepare a presentence investigation report.

The judge remanded Li back to the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service to await his sentencing.

Attorney Joe Hill served as counsel for Li. Assistant U.S. attorney Kirk Schuler represented the U.S. government.

According to the plea agreement, Li told an undercover federal agent acting as a boat captain in October 2009 that he wants to recruit and smuggle aliens from Saipan to Guam by boat.

Li was predisposed to smuggle aliens from Saipan to Guam. He was not induced to do so by the undercover boat captain or the U.S. government.

Li asked co-defendant Qingmei Cheng to translate his conversations and negotiations with the undercover boat captain. Cheng voluntarily agreed to help as translator despite being told the smuggling venture was illegal.

Li recruited the 22 persons and charged a fee for his services.

On Jan. 5, 2010, Li boarded a boat with the 22 alien passengers he recruited, including Junhua Chen, in order to smuggle themselves to Guam.

Chen, himself, and others did not have prior official authorization to enter or reside in Guam, according to the plea agreement.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested Li and 23 other Chinese nationals on Jan. 5 just as they were about to board the boat for Guam.

Except for one, all pleaded guilty. One defendant proceeded with a bench trial, but then judge Alex Munson found him guilty and subsequently sentenced him to one-year probation.

Li is the last of the 24 defendants to be convicted.

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D	Potato Crab Salad	Fish Fillet	Philippine Chicken Curry	Cold Soba	Seafood Spagbetti
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Pro Se,

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE COMMONWEALTH
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

ELEONORA MARISA M. BALMORI	)	FCD – DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0651R
vs.	)	VERIFIED EX-PARTE MOTION FOR AN ORDER TO SERVE BY PUBLICATION
RENATO S. ARDAMOY	)	
Respondent,	)	

MOTION

COMES NOW, the petitioner Eleonora Marisa M. Balmori respectfully moves this court to permit service to be made by publication under 7 CMC Section 1301, because Respondent cannot be served within the Philippines. I have numerous attempts notify the Respondent through service by mail, first was claimed but no respond and secondly I received 1 (one) notice to returned mail due to being unclaimed. I am seeking this court's understanding to allow me to serve by publication so I can move this case forward to a final conclusion.

Dated this 12th day of March, 2010.

/s/ ELEONORA MARISA M. BALMORI
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PSS energy conservation steps questioned

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

An employee of the Public School System's AmeriCorps Program has complained about the ways PSS is conserving energy, citing different measures being enforced among departments and sections.

In a March 8 letter to Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan, PSS employee Remi Sablan asked for clarification about the rules being used to conserve energy and appealed for consideration on behalf of employees in her department who are experiencing difficulties due to the conservation efforts being enforced in their office.

Sablan, who had heart surgery in 2008, asked the commissioner to allow her department to continuously use their air conditioning units for health reasons.

Sablan brought the matter to the commissioner's level due to the alleged lack of response from the Office of Curriculum and Instruction where she first asked for consideration.

Sablan said she knows the energy conservation plan is due to the system's limited funds and that it is supposed to be implemented in all PSS offices and school campuses.

However, Sablan said, she had observed in other offices that personnel were comfortably cool, including their hallways, yet her department's office on the second floor is warm and muggy.

Sablan pointed out that her office does not have a window to at least allow some natural air circulation to flow through.

Sablan said that PSS shuts down the aircon at her office for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon without prior planning or alternative action to provide for a comfortable working environment for the staff.

"I am all for conserving energy, but before something like this gets implemented, there should be some planning with the staff's working environment in mind," Sablan told the commissioner.

Unnecessary expenses

Sablan also disagreed with some of the measures being implemented by the system.

"I can understand conserving energy, but if we are doing this to lessen costs, why are we starting with our working environment? Why not cut down on the monthly colorful and costly newsletters, expensive Blackberries for principals and program managers, expensive and luxury conference rooms and decors instead?" Sablan asked.

She pointed out that all these are luxurious expenses yet their office is expected to shut down their air conditioning units.

Sablan asked the commissioner to give more attention to a healthy, learning environment.

"Let's start from the administration and cut these useless expenses and plan and provide for a decent learning environment for the students," she asked.

The employee encouraged the commissioner to visit Hopwood Junior High School and sit on one of the many rusted chairs and dilapidated ping-pong tables being used as classroom tables.

Sablan said the philosophy of "Student First" requires a good learning environment.

Saipan Tribune learned that Remi Sablan has been on medical leave since last week.

As of yesterday, Commissioner Rita Sablan was still off-island. Acting Education Commissioner Charlie Kenty was in a meeting when contacted yesterday.

In an interview with Charlotte Camacho, principals' representative for elementary schools, she said the energy conservation plan is being implemented across the board to lessen utility expenses.

In many schools, air conditioning units are being shut down at certain times of the day or temperature limits are imposed. Lights and faucets are also being closely monitored and shut down when not in use.

Hopwood Junior High principal Jonas Barcinas said Friday that utility expenses went down in most schools since PSS implemented its energy conservation plan.

PSS spends about $3 million on utilities every year.

BUDGET

From Page 1

A recent amendment to the Constitution calls for the suspension of the governor's salary if he fails to submit a budget proposal to the Legislature by April 1. Lawmakers' salaries would also be suspended if they fail to pass a budget by Oct. 1.

Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), at the same time, pre-filed yesterday a bill that seeks to implement an across-the-board 5 percent budget cut on top of the 7.25 percent cut that Fitial recently ordered due to the revised FY 2010 projected revenue.

If Deleon Guerrero's House Bill 17-49 becomes law, it will result in a 12.25 percent across-the-board budget cut for the current fiscal year.

"We have to cut this much to address the revised projected revenue of $137 million. This is in lieu of the austerity measure or the reduction in government work hours. This proportionate cut will give different agencies an opportunity to decide among themselves where to cut within their agencies and not necessarily affect the salaries of employees," Deleon Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune*.

But the Fitial administration is firm on having the austerity bill, House Bill 17-45, passed.

"How else could you balance the $137 million budget without austerity?" Fitial said.

The House passed the austerity bill on Thursday on an 11-8 vote, but the Senate is lukewarm to the measure.

When asked about his options if the austerity measure fails to pass the Legislature, the governor said: "Then I have to invoke my constitutional power to regulate expenditures."

The Republicans have also been urging the Fitial administration to begin working on the FY 2011 budget due to a constitutional amendment that would shut down non-essential government service if no budget is passed by Oct. 1, 2010.

House Legislative Initiative 16-11, which was ratified by voters in the November 2010 general elections, amended the CNMI Constitution to mandate the passage of a balanced budget every year. It removed the ability of the government to go on continuing resolution in the absence of a budget. Instead, it requires the shutdown of government offices except for the provision of services essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the people of the CNMI.

Track record

Fitial said he will submit on time a $137 million budget for FY 2011, which is the same as the revised projected revenue for FY 2010.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said the Fitial administration "has a track record of submitting budget request on time."

The original estimated resource for FY 2010 was $150.5 million, with $148.08 million to be spent for government operations.

The revision prompted Fitial to order an immediate across-the-board 7.25 percent cut in the current budget of CNMI government agencies and offices.

On top of the reduced budget authority, the Fitial administration also expects the Legislature to pass an austerity bill, which cuts government work hours by 10 per pay period, or from the regular 80 hours to 70.

No Senate voting soon

Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee chair Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota) said yesterday that members will not be voting on the austerity bill during the Senate's next session on April 8.

"We will not be voting on the bill on April 8 because the Fiscal Affairs Committee will conduct public hearings on the bill first, on the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota. One of the three public hearings may be held before April 8," Taimanao said in a phone interview yesterday.

The schedule for the final hearings will be finalized today.

"The committee has not made a decision on whether to support the bill or not, until we hear directly from the public," she added.

Senate President Paul A. Manglona (R-Rota) said the April 1 session has been rescheduled to give way to Maundy Thursday.

Pay cut or not

House Ways and Means Committee chair Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan) said failure to institute the austerity measure in the soonest possible time may result in payless paydays as early as April 23, 2010. His bill is projected to reduce government cost by $4.5 million if passed promptly.

Covenant members said it is better to have pay cuts than lay offs or termination of government employees.

But House Republican members, led by Minority Leader Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan), said there are other means to address the government's revised projected revenue of $137 million. Eight of nine Republicans voted "no" on the bill.

Deleon Guerrero said he will do his best to lobby support for his "Five Percent Budget Reduction Act of 2010," so that those who earn less than or a little more than $10,000 a year won't have to battle with a 10-hour reduction in their paycheck every pay period.

He, however, said his H.B. 17-49 may not be acted on during the House's Wednesday session because of the 72-hour public notice requirement.

Deleon Guerrero's bill is co-sponsored by seven other Republican House members.

MHS

From Page 1

converged on Obyan Beach to participate in the traditional JROTC Cadet Leadership Challenge Encampment, which ran from March 24 to March 28

The Dolphins topped both the cadet challenge test and the interactive academic challenge, besting comrades from other participating high schools.

The team of Rota High School was also undefeated in the platoon unarmed drill, while cadets from Kagman High School prevailed in the inaugural tug-of-war competition.

Saipan Tribune learned that the federal government provided the CNMI JROTC financial and logistical support to underwrite the cost of transportation, meals, equipment, and supplies for the five-day training exercise.

According to Lt. Col. Bob Gay, director of PSS Army Instruction, all five cadet battalion commanders related that the greatest part of this experience was the opportunity to meet new people, make new friends, and compete in a positive environment. All cadets were randomly assigned to units that included students from each school.

Besides the competitions, cadets also participated in several activities that included roll call, zero dark thirty, physical training, rappelling, leadership reaction course, obstacle course, platoon drill, rope bridge construction, knot-tying, land navigation, and first aid.

The airport's fire rescue department also provided a real-life demonstration of how they respond and react to an airline disaster, with cadets putting on the safety suits and breathing apparatus and manning the hoses.

Nightly activities included drill practice, academic challenge practice, socializing with cadets from sister schools, singing, and preparation of leaders for the next day's activities.

Gay said what excited the cadets most was the rappelling activity on Friday where all 169 cadets rappelled off the bluffs overlooking Ladder Beach.

"This activity continues to provide the most excitement for the cadets. They overcame any anxiety and negotiated the 50-foot descent in one of the most pristine environments throughout the world," Gay said, adding that Rota High School principal Sharlene Manglona was the first person to execute the rappel.

Saipan Southern High School's acting principal Craig Garrison also joined cadets during breakfast Saturday where he said he wants to enroll as many freshmen as possible into the school's JROTC program next year.

Saipan Tribune learned that Sgt. First Class (retired) Chris Baroldy, operations officer from the 8th Brigade Cadet Command higher headquarters, observed the five-day training.

For Baroldy, this was one of the best encampments he has observed from a planning, support, and execution standpoint.

In the closing ceremonies held Sunday, Gay recognized the JROTC cadre, the support personnel, and chaperones for all their hard work and support.

The camp culminated with a five-mile road march from the Obyan camp site to the MHS JROTC classrooms.

CONVICTED

From Page 1

ment reportedly refused to issue her a new passport because of her criminal conviction.

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona, who sentenced Xia Tang on Feb. 20, 2008, said yesterday she is troubled by Tang's situation.

In a written order, Manglona said Tang's removal from the CNMI is an important aspect of her plea bargain. At the same time, Manglona said, Tang continues to remain in the Commonwealth without the privilege to work legally and provide for her own needs.

"The court finds itself without any power to enforce the removal without a valid passport," Manglona said.

For the time being, Manglona directed the Office of Adult Probation to continue monitoring Tang during her probationary period.

Tang was sentenced to five months in prison for possession of less than a gram of crystal methamphetamine or "ice."

Court records show that Tang, also known as Mimi, was originally charged with trafficking and possessing "ice."

Four months after her arrest, Tang agreed to plead guilty to one count of illegal possession of a controlled substance, a felony.

In exchange for her guilty plea, Manglona ordered Tang to serve five months in prison and to meet some conditions, including voluntarily departing the Commonwealth at her own expense within a month of her release from custody.

Tang completed her prison term on March 5, 2008.

After a span of two years and 13 court review hearings, however, Tang's case remains at an impasse.

In her order yesterday, Manglona said Tang has complied with the conditions of her probation, and the only outstanding matter is her departure from the CNMI.

At the beginning of this case, Tang surrendered her expired Chinese passport to the court as a condition of her bail order.

After serving her prison term, Tang attempted to renew her passport through her consulate's office.

During the first year and a half, the defendant was unable to obtain a new passport because she did not have the passport fee.

The Commonwealth finally secured government funds to pay for the renewal. She subsequently completed all the necessary application forms to renew her passport and tendered the payment to her consulate's office.

Four months later, Tang was advised that her passport would not be renewed because of her criminal conviction. Her payment check was returned uncashed.

"In essence, defendant's government refuses to issue her a new passport to allow her to return to her home country because of her criminal conviction," Manglona said.

After the federal government took control of immigration matters in the CNMI in November 2009, Tang presented herself to federal authorities to have them remove her.

Up to this time, no action has been taken against her.

"Defendant now remains in the Commonwealth without a valid passport to travel, and without a legal basis to find work to support herself. Her subsistence is solely from friends who have voluntarily supported her," Manglona said.

IT&E to build new cell site on Rota to cover 'dead spot'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Telecommunications provider IT&E will be building one additional cell site on Rota to cover what it calls a "dead spot"—an area that has no mobile phone signal—between Sinapalo and Songsong.

IT&E executive vice president Larry Knecht said this in a March 9 response letter to Senate President Paul A. Manglona (R-Rota), who called the telecom firm's attention to the need for improving cellular phone service on Rota's two main villages.

Manglona, in a Feb. 18 letter to Knecht, said the Rota Legislative Delegation brought up this matter to the telecom firm as early as January 2004, by offering the delegation's assistance in finding a suitable location to place an antenna or relay station to improve coverage in the area.

The problem area includes several hotels and the Northern Marianas College campus on Rota. Because the area also encompasses the only highway linking Sinapalo and Songsong, any means of emergency cell phone calls along this roadway is very limited in the event of an accident.

"In my opinion, it would seem reasonable to provide cell phone coverage over this significant area on the island of Rota… I am optimistic that IT&E will consider improving cell phone coverage between Sinapalo and Songsong villages for the benefit of the people of Rota and our visitors," the Senate president told Knecht.

Knecht said IT&E is aware of the cellular "dead spot" between the two villages. He said for this reason, IT&E has included in its Fiscal Year 2010 budget the installation of one additional cell site on Rota.

"Our Network Engineering team is now in the process of doing site selection and acquisition for a site location. We have already ordered the equipment needed for this project from our suppliers. Our target completion date and ready for service date of this new cell site is on or before the end of third quarter, this year," Knecht told Manglona.

He added that IT&E appreciates any support and help from the Rota Legislative Delegation "on expediting permit approvals as it will surely help shorten the implementation of this project."

Lawmaker undergoes 2 surgeries

Rep. Fredrick P. Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), who has been off-island for over a month now, underwent two surgeries in the Philippines and is now recuperating at the Asian Hospital and Medical Center in Manila, his office said yesterday.

The freshman lawmaker traveled to Manila on Feb. 22 and was admitted to the Asian Hospital.

"After numerous tests, the representative underwent brain surgery at the base of his skull to correct a very serious trigeminal nerve disorder. About five days ago, he underwent another surgical procedure," his office said.

Deleon Guerrero, a father of three, is now resting and recuperating at the Asian Hospital, and may be back to work in a week and a half.

His office said in his absence, he solicited his father's help, former senator Herman R. Deleon Guerrero, to manage the operations of his office, including work on all legislative matters that come across his desk.

The senior Deleon Guerrero could not be reached for additional comment yesterday afternoon.

"The office staff extends their sincere appreciation for your understanding, thoughts and prayers for the representative's speedy recovery," the office said.

Due to his medical condition, Deleon Guerrero has been absent from sessions where members acted on critical bills such as the austerity measure on Thursday. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
PO Box 501521 Saipan, MP 96950, TEL.: (670)322-6537 FAX: (670)322-6536
TTY (670) 322-6449 EMAIL:voc.rehab@saipan.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §9910, the public is advised that the State Rehabilitation Council & Statewide Independent Living Council will hold their FY 2010 Annual Joint Meeting on Wednesday March 31, 2010 at the Azucena Room, Fiesta Resort Hotel at 9:00am-2:00pm. Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY ITEM
Call to Order/Roll Call
Review & Adoption of Agenda
Review & Adoption of Previous Minutes

II. REPORTS
SILC Chairperson
CLI Director
SRC Chairperson
OVR Director

III. OLD BUSINESS
FY 2011 State Plan Updates for IL & VR
Accessible Mass Transit
Training

IV. NEW BUSINESS
Needs Assessment

V. CONSUMERS' FORUM

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS & MISCELLANEOUS

VII. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require accommodations such as large print or sign language interpreters, are asked to call 322-6537(voice) or 322-6449(TTY). Please contact Magin Iginoef (Council Liaison) two days in advance for necessary arrangements.

/s/ Jesus Elameto
SRC Chairperson

/s/ Stephen Dutro
SILC Chairperson

Publication of this notice is paid for by federal funds made possible by the United States Department of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

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First Week	Monday (April 5)	Tuesday (April 6)	Wednesday (April 7)	Thursday (April 8)	Friday (April 9)
4:00PM	Front Desk (1)	Front Desk (2)	Front Desk (3)	Front Desk (4)	Front Desk (5)
5:00PM	Food & Beverage(1)	Food & Beverage(2)	Food & Beverage(3)	Food & Beverage(4)	Food & Beverage(5)
6:00PM	Housekeeping (1)	Housekeeping (2)	Housekeeping(3)	Housekeeping(4)	Housekeeping(5)
7:00PM	Pool Attendant(1)	Pool Attendant(2)	Pool Attendant(3)	Pool Attendant(4)	Pool Attendant(5)
8:00PM	Lifeguard (1)	Lifeguard (2)	Lifeguard (3)	Lifeguard (4)	Lifeguard (5)
9:00PM	General Maintenance(1)	General Maintenance(2)	General Maintenance(3)	General Maintenance(4)	General Maintenance(5)

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Another investor sues Quichocho in land lease dispute

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Another investor is suing lawyer Ramon K. Quichocho for allegedly breaching a land lease agreement despite being paid $218,000.

Sin Ho Nam, through counsel Colin M. Thompson, sued Quichocho and the land's co-owner, Joaquin Q. Atalig, in federal court yesterday for alleged breach of a lease agreement. Nam also sued Quichocho for breach of fiduciary duty.

Nam asked the Superior Court to order Quichocho and Atalig to pay him $218,000 representing the full rental price he paid in exchange for the leased premises for 55 years.

Quichocho declined to comment, saying he has not seen and not been served with the complaint.

Thompson stated in the complaint that Nam first met Quichocho in 2007 when they discussed the purchase of real property from the lawyer.

Thompson said Quichocho told Nam that he owned a property near Ladder Beach and that he was willing to re-lease it for 55 years. Nam and Quichocho discussed the price through an interpreter.

Two to three more meetings were held. Quichocho then allegedly offered to prepare all legal documents necessary to consummate the transaction.

Thompson said Nam agreed to allow the lawyer to prepare all legal documents and relied on him to do so.

Quichocho prepared a lease agreement in order to convey possession of the real property consisting of 8,077 square meters to Nam.

After drafting the lease, Quichocho reportedly told Nam that they needed to go to Rota to obtain the signature of Atalig, who also owned the premises.

Nam was allegedly not shown the lease or provided a copy of it before or during the trip to Rota.

Thompson said that on Rota, Quichocho and Nam met with Atalig, but there was no discussion about the terms of the lease.

After returning to Saipan, Nam went to Quichocho's office and at that time the lease was presented to him for the first time.

Thompson said Quichocho directed Nam to sign the lease, which was written in English and not translated to him at that time.

"Mr. Nam knew that Quichocho was a lawyer and trusted Quichocho's expertise and professional standing to accomplish Mr. Nam's goals," Thompson said.

Thompson said Quichocho never explained the terms of the lease to Nam.

"The lease prepared by Quichocho was not objectively reasonable. The lease was drafted in a one sided manner so as to be unconscionable," he said.

Nam made all rental payment required under the lease for a total of $218,000.

Thompson said that, on March 20, 2009, Quichocho and Atalig mailed a notice of default and violations to Nam.

The notice claimed that Nam had defaulted on certain provision of the lease by abandoning the property, failing to provide liability insurance, and failing to provide fire and casualty insurance.

The notice was mailed to Nam at a time when he was in Korea. Nam returned to Saipan on April 26, 2009 and picked up the notice the following day.

On April 30, 2009, Nam, through counsel, responded in writing to Quichocho and Atalig, that he had public liability insurance but was unable to acquire fire insurance because the premises were unimproved.

Nam also explained that he had not abandoned the premises.

Thompson said on Sept. 29, 2009, Quichocho and Atalig terminated the lease.

Last December, Korean businesswoman Jung Ja Kin also sued Quichocho and his wife in federal court for allegedly engaging in corporate hijacking and a pattern of racketeering activities.

Another Korean businessman, Byung Kook Choi, also sued Quichocho and his wife, Frances, in November 2008 relating to a squabble over 10 poker machines on Rota. Quichocho and his wife, however, filed a counter lawsuit against Choi for conversion.

COALITION PARTNERS
The Department of Community & Cultural Affairs' Division of Youth Services has joined the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence in a movement toward ending violence against women. The coalition is headed by Maisie B. Tenorio. The DCCA/DYS, through a Memorandum of Agreement, will collaborate with the coalition in April wherein the agencies will sponsor and spearhead activities designed to raise awareness in child abuse prevention and violence against women. DCCA Secretary Melvin O. Faisao and Laura T. Ogumoro, DYS Director, jointly stated that the partnership will serve as an objective work plan to improve existing services in the community and enable victims and families to avail of resources in the community. Photo shows, back row, from left, Coalition member Kiki Igitol, DCCA Secretary Faisao, and DYS director Ogumoro. Front, from left, are department secretary Rhonda Nogis and Coalition director Maisie Tenorio.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New learning center offers tourism skills upgrading

By WALTER J. SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

If you are looking to start a career in the CNMI's visitor industry, for as little as $4 a day, you can earn an entry-level certification in up to six areas of professional hospitality at the new Island Resort Learning Center, located at Herjoy's Apartments in San Antonio.

Classes begin on April 5, 2010 and will offer one-hour training classes for the following areas: front desk clerk, food and beverage services, commercial housekeeping, pool attendants, lifeguards, and general maintenance.

"With the play out of all the federalization laws, contract workers will be leaving. As these jobs become available, local islanders with U.S. citizenship will be filling these types of positions," said Harry McCutcheon, founder and instructor at the IRLC.

With over 50 years of experience in the tourism industry, McCutcheon has done it all from bellboy to general manager. He has been all over the world and worked in many different large and small settings. McCutcheon considers Saipan home and he is certainly one who knows the importance of the tourism industry here in the CNMI.

WALTER J. SUTHERLAND
Harry McCutcheon welcomes students to register for classes beginning April 5 at the new Island Resort Learning Center on the second floor of Herjoy's Apartments in San Antonio.

McCutcheon will be instructing the Front Desk (4pm), Food and Beverage (5pm), and Housekeeping (6pm) courses.

Vincente Benny Iriarte will be instructing the courses for Pool Attendant (7pm), Lifeguard (8pm), and General Maintenance (9pm).

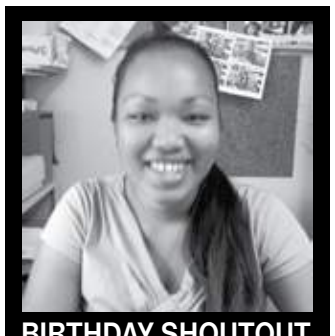
Iriate has over 25 years experience as a professional big game fishing charter boat captain and as an ocean sports and recreational activities director.

A certificate of completion will be awarded after finishing a 10-hour course and passing a final examination.

"The curriculum is tailor-made to accommodate the CNMI hotels and resorts," added McCutcheon.

The courses are offered hourly from 4pm to 9pm, Monday through Friday and take two weeks to complete. One full course costs $40 up front, or you can pay as you go for $4 a class hour. Register on the second floor at the Herjoy's apartment complex or online at www.islandresortlearningcenter.webs.com. For more information call (670)-235-7711 or visit the Web site.

HELPING THE HUMANITIES
Tan Siu Lin Foundation manger Ed Arriola Jr., right, presents a $1,000 check to NMI Council for the Humanities board member Joann T. Aquino. Also pictured is the Council's executive director, Scott Russell. The Tan Siu Lin Foundation awarded the donation to support Council's annual Junior High Mock Trial Program, which was held earlier this month. Russell said the funds will be used to help cover transportation costs for the Rota and Tinian participants.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT
Happy 21st birthday to Mada Muna! Greetings come you're your co-workers and boss.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

DPS sets DUI checkpoints this weekend

The Department of Public Safety will be conducting DUI checkpoints on April 3 and 4 as part of its "Impaired Driving National Enforcement Crackdown."

The first setup will be on April 3, Saturday, on Beach Road Chalan Laulau by Dr. Kaipat's residence, on the southbound outer lane, from 10pm to 11:15pm.

The second set up will be on April 4, Sunday, along 2W Gualo Rai by the Covenant building on the southbound outer lane, from 1am to 2:15am.

Each checkpoint will last at least 75 minutes (1 hour 15 minutes) at each location.

Checkpoints are subject to termination if it begins to rain.

Police officers will also be conducting highway criminal interdictions, saturation patrol, and aggressive driver interdictions, and laser activities.

This activity is part of the department's efforts to deter, detect and apprehend impaired motorists on highways and to ensure that all vehicle occupants are protected.

Statistical data and information compiled by the department shows a total of 62 DUI arrests from November 2009 to March 15, 2010.

For more information, contact Sgt. Sylvan Rangamar 664-9084 or 664-9085. ***(DPS)***

SPECTRUM ELECTRIC DONATION
Saipan Southern High School principal Craig Garrison accepts a check for $5,000 from Joe Corella, owner of Spectrum Electric. The funds were a donation for the Manta Band's Carnegie Hall trip to New York City in April. The band continues to try and raise nearly $150,000 for the trip. Anyone wishing to donate funds or tax credit may contact the school directly at 237-3706 or 664-4000.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MINA unveils first recycling and trash bins

Despite the many activities to choose from Saturday morning, over 50 individuals from government agencies, public and private organizations and the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps turned out to celebrate the installation of Mariana Islands Nature Alliance's first recycling and trash bins at the ribbon "untying" ceremony at Obyan Beach.

The bins were made possible through a grant from the NOAA Marine Debris Prevention Program to "establish an island culture of recycling."

So far, eight organizations and families have adopted bins, pledging to pay for regular waste collection services for one year and to conduct at least two beach cleanups at their site.

U.S. Rep. Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) was on hand with his partnering organization, the Susupe Hi-5 basketball team, to receive certificates of appreciation for adopting the bins to be installed at Kilili Beach next week.

MINA chair Fran Castro said, "Partnerships such as these are the keystone to environmental stewardship. We deeply appreciate the commitment that the congressman and these organizations and businesses have demonstrated towards protecting our islands' natural resources."

Other adopting organizations include Brabu Pharmacy and Wellness Center (13 Fishermen Monument); CTSI and Tan Holdings (Susupe Beach Park); Ericco Enterprises (Laolao Beach); Marianas Trekking, (Wing Beach); Rotary Club of Saipan (Garapan Fishing Basin); and the Marianas Visitor Authority (site not yet selected).

"CTSI Logistics-Saipan is among those companies who have continuously upheld rehabilitation projects to protect and preserve the beauty of the island," said Saipan general manager Rene Magalong, who learned about the Adopt-a-Bin program through the Beautify CNMI network. CTSI Logistics-Saipan's parent company, Tan Holdings, adopted Susupe Beach in 2008. The company encourages team members to join in cleanups by scheduling regular birthday celebrations at the park each month.

"We were very pleased with the turnout, especially with the 20 cadets from the JROTC camp who took time to collect over 40 lbs of trash and recyclables from Obyan's shoreline," said MINA's project manager. "That's 40 lbs of trash that would otherwise have becoming marine debris. We welcome others to join in the program; only two sites remain un-adopted."

If you or your company or organization would like to Adopt-a-Bin, contact MINA by visiting their Web site at www.minapacific.org or emailing Kathy Yuknavage at Kathy@minapacific.org. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

U.S. Rep. Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP), standing second from left, joins Mariana Islands Nature Alliance officers in presenting certificates of appreciation to the different organizations and private companies that have adopted recycling and trash bins in different beaches on Saipan.

JROTC assists MINA cleanup

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Michael Kukkun, Shawn Escalada, Tavita Levta, Jennica Amancio, Genevieve Gottwald, Alex Castro, Tayson Arriola, Virbon Frial, Ernesto Hidalgo, Michael Ito, CNMI Delegate Kilili Sablan, Kagman High School's MSG Burke, Craig Chargualaf, Brandon Dikito, and Kristian Yebra.

Some 23 CNMI Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps cadets helped the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance in a beach cleanup held at Obyan Beach Saturday to promote environmental awareness of coastal resources.

The Mariana Islands Nature Alliance's placed three new recycle containers donated by local businesses to help keep Obyan beach clean. Each newly placed container were for plastic, glass, and mixed waste.

U.S. Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan (D-MP), who was present at the event, thanked the CNMI JROTC Program for their participation in the cleanup. The cadets present at the event were from Rota, Tinian, and Saipan and were on the island for their leadership encampment. ***(PR)***

MCS student selected to national law, CSI forum in DC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Mount Carmel School 10th grader Jacqueline V. Santos was selected to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on law and crime scene investigation scheduled this summer in Washington, D.C.

In a letter from Tonia Jacobson, director of admissions for the National Youth Leadership Forum on Law and CSI, the 15-year-old was invited to the event because of her exemplary academic record and interest in the fields of law, forensics or crime scene investigation.

Among the benefits of attending the forum is the experience of discovering how to enhance the leadership skills that Santos already possess, and more importantly, learning how to apply those skills immediately upon returning home.

Jacobson said that by attending the event on law and CSI, Santos will also gain valuable insight into the challenges and rewards of a career in the legal, forensics, and crime scene investigation fields.

According to the child's guardian, this is the first time that Santos was invited to a national event and most likely would confirm her attendance.

At the forum, Santos was informed that she will join a select group of outstanding high school scholars from across the United States for an extraordinary experience of discovery and mentorship as she is welcomed at some of the country's most prominent law schools, law firms, and legal institutions.

"By meeting and speaking with law professors, students, partners and associates, you will discover the realities of the legal profession," Jacobson told the student, adding that she will also provided the opportunity to interact and network with some of the nation's most preeminent jurists, lawmakers and legal scholars—leaders in the field whose dedication and expertise have brought them to the top of their profession.

Santos is also expected to explore the burgeoning fields of forensics and crime scene investigation as she takes part in a legal case prepared by Dr. Lawrence Tate, one of the nation's most renowned pathologists whose 33-year career has taken him to morgues, crime scenes and crash sites.

A question-and-answer forum with Dr. Tate will also be provided to the attendees.

At the forum, the local student will analyze evidence, apply legal reasoning to the importance of evidence collected at a crime scene, determine its significance to both the prosecution and defense and follow the chain of that evidence from the crime scene to the trial.

Santos is also expected to participate in the mock trial during the weeklong forum where she will play the roles of attorney, witness and jury member.

Jacobson said the forum is a practical, hands-on experience that will provide students like Santos a real-life look at the fields of law, forensics, and crime scene investigation and enhance their ability to make the very best decisions about their future and their career.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Gualo Rai
Saipan, MP 96950

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
DPW10-RFP-008

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES
FOR THE CROSS ISLAND ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, PHASE II-B
CM-NH-0031 (015)

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed proposals from qualified Architectural/Engineering companies for the **Construction Management Services for the Cross Island Road Improvements, Phase II-B (CNMI).**

This procurement is made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations dated May 24, 2001, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is **not available** because its use is prohibited by the Federal Law granting the funding for this project. Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 4-102 of the Procurement Regulations.

Any corporation or partnership "firm" must have or obtained a valid Certificate of Authorization **(COA)** from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Board of Professional Licensing (CNMI BOPL). Individuals and/or sole proprietors are required to possess a valid professional license issued by the CNMI BOPL.

The Scope of Work will be available on or after **March 23, 2010** at the Department of Public Works, Technical Services Division, 2nd Floor, Oleai Commercial Center, Saipan. A **mandatory** Pre-Proposal Conference is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works, Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Gualo Rai Commercial Building on **April 9, 2010**. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Mr. Joseph M. Inos, Jr., Director of Technical Services Division, 1353 Mednilla Avenue-Capitol Hill, Saipan, or faxed to (670) 234-3547 no later than 4:30 p.m. local time **April 26, 2010**.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored bases on the following criteria:
1. Company Background and Qualifications (5 pages maximum each company) **– 25%**
2. Qualifications of Team or assigned personnel and organizational structure (5 pages combined maximum) **– 30%**
3. Past Experience of team and/or assigned personnel on projects successfully completed of similar size and scope (10 pages combined maximum) **– 25%**
4. Current Workload of Firm (5 pages maximum) **– 20%**

Proposals must be sealed and marked **"DPW10-RFP-008"**. For proposers within the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of sealed proposals must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. local time, **April 29, 2010**. Proposers located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a **Notice of Intent to Propose**. Notices of Intent to submit proposals must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. local time, **April 29, 2010** and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of sealed proposals must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than April 29, 2010 and must be received no later than **May 10, 2010**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

Discussions shall be conducted with at least three (3) of the firms regarding the contract requirements and technical approach and selection made there from, in order of preference, of no less than three (3) firms determined to be the most highly qualified to perform the services required. A contract shall be negotiated with the highest qualified Architect-Engineer firm at a price determined to be fair and reasonable to the government, factors such as the prices proposed by other firms responding to the solicitation shall be considered. If a fair and reasonable price can not be negotiated with the highest ranking qualified firm, then additional firms may be selected in order of competence and qualifications and negotiations continued until a fair and reasonable price is agreed upon.

The successful A-E firm will be subjected to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301.

This project is funded in whole by a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Contract award is contingent upon funding approval by the FHWA. All offerors shall be subjected to the provisions of the Federal Aquisition Regulations Part 52, Subpart 209-5, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Proposed Debarment, and Other Responsibility Matters, March 1996.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes that will be charged to the proposer awarded a contract for this project, including excise tax.

The Government reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and to waive any imperfections in any Proposal in the best interest of the Government. All Proposals shall become property of the Government.

/s/ MARTIN C. SABLAN
Acting Secretary of Public Works

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement & Supply

IUMC's Easter Week of firsts

Immanuel United Methodist Church's coming week is full of firsts! Instead of its usual church Easter Party, they have invited Chalan Kanoa children to join them on Saturday, April 3, from 10am to noon.

"The wonderfully safe play area needs to be shared and the fun always had with dyeing, hiding, hunting eggs needs to be shared too! The simple basket making, games, and lunch will be even nicer with new friends," said Lay Pastor Millie Carroll.

"We hope this will be a beginning of closer IUMC involvement in Chalan Kanoa, with more community activities in our space and in working together on issues facing our Chalan Kanoa neighborhood," Carroll added.

Maundy Thursday (Thursday, April 1, 7pm) will be observed with a simple Passover meal, hymns, scripture, ending in communion using the meal's remaining bread and wine (juice). The activity tries to follow the Bible's description of Jesus' last evening with his disciples.

On Good Friday (Friday, April 2, 7:30pm) during scripture, hymns, prayer, the church's huge cross will be taken from the wall and held by worshippers, rotating and holding as they feel led. Some may wish to hold twice. This gives all the privilege to share in Jesus' burden on the cross. And then with much effort the heavy cross will be lifted to the wall in remembrance of Christ's agony in his crucifixion.

BRYAN JONES

Immanuel United Methodist Church kids have invited Chalan Kanoa children to join their Saturday First Neighborhood Easter Party on April 3. Photo shows, from left to right (front): Semisi Paongo Jr., Lata Paongo, Jerald Aquino; (back) Mary Deala, Serafina Rogoyawa, Lay Pastor Millie Carroll, and Grace Dowez.

"I think this evening and replacing the cross will be the most deeply spiritual part of our Holy Week," said Church Council chair Cris Lumanlan.

On Saturday, the Chalan Kanoa Neighborhood Easter Party will be followed by the Teen Team decorating the sanctuary with giant butterflies, some made last three Sundays in Sunday School, many made in 2005 when the kids were young.

"We've again chosen that symbol of new life and resurrection and maybe the now teens will recognize their butterflies made five years' ago," Carroll said. "This will be the first use of them since the move to Chalan Kanoa two years ago. When IUMC formerly worshipped in Koblerville and used the butterflies in the Easter Service, the sanctuary seemed so alive with Jesus' resurrection that we kept them up for a long, long time. And we probably will this year!"

Easter Sunrise Service at 6am is another most meaningful first.

"We've invited the Korean Immanuel Methodist Church and the Tagalog Service Methodist Church to Easter Sunrise Celebration at our church," Carroll said.

Lay Leader Losana Rogoyawa added: "The Korean IUMC lovingly provided us with space and help in their church for many years. We want to host them as a thank you on Easter, Christianity's most Holy Day. The three congregations have often celebrated Easter Sunrise together on a beach and this will be the first joint observance in our church."

The Family Service at 9:30am will be a multi-aged joyful celebration of Jesus' resurrection with special choir music and liturgical dance.

IUMC warmly welcomes readers to the services. IUMC is on Chalan Kanoa Drive and Barbara Avenue in Chalan Kanoa (east of Town Center and Beach Road, near Mt. Carmel Catholic Church). For more information, call Lay Pastor Millie Carroll at 322-6158. ***(PR)***

Can you identify

THE NMI Council for the Humanities, in collaboration with the *Saipan Tribune*, is running a series of photographs in this section every Tuesday and is inviting the public to identify the persons or places featured in this section.

If you can identify the persons or places in the picture, please contact the NMI Council for the Humanities by telephone (235-4785), via email (photo@nmihumanities.org) or by visiting the Council's office located in Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai. These images are from the Council's Historic Photograph Database which is currently being developed to help document the history and cultures of the CNMI.

The persons featured in last week's photo have been identified as Roger Ludwick, left, and Manuel "Brown" A. Tenorio. They were identified by Chong Torres, Maria Islam, Delores Reyes Drew, Joaquin Lizama, Rose Magofna, Bernie Palacios, Connie Taitano, Ray Dela Cruz, Roman Reyes, Joe Aguon, Conrad Crisostimo, Gerald Agulto, Michelle Camacho, Cecelia Lisua, and Debra Pinaula.

LB now charging fee for OGA docs

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Legislative Bureau is now assessing a fee of 50 cents per page for paper copies of documents provided pursuant to the Open Government Act, which re-applied to the Legislature effective Dec. 7 as a result of a popular initiative ratified in the Nov. 7 general election.

Legislative Bureau director Glenna SP. Reyes, in a notice published in the March 22 Commonwealth Register, said the fee is established "to cover the cost of copying to the Legislative Bureau."

"In lieu of copying, requested documents may be inspected free of charge, or, where possible, provided to the requester by electronic copy," Reyes said in the one-page notice.

As a result of the Open Government Act of 2007, the Legislature now also has to respond to citizen requests for public records within 10 days. Failure to grant those requests subjects them to penalties.

The Open Government Act also requires the Legislature to issue notices of meetings and sessions with agenda, 72 hours before the meetings or sessions.

Besides the public notice requirements, other changes to the rule involve public comments and record keeping.

The House and Senate amended the rules to comply with the OGA initiative, authored by former Rep. Tina Sablan.

MDX to set up aid tent on Good Friday

The MDX Radio Group, Saipan under the auspices of newly elected president Domingo "Sandie" Pablo, will once again participate in providing free services to Catholic devotees during this Lenten season.

Pablo said they will set up a booth to distribute water and food to island residents who will make the trek up Mt. Tapochao on Good Friday.

MDX has been doing this every year since 1994, in observance of Holy Week on Mt. Tapochao. As early as Thursday night, MDX will set up its booth to facilitate its services and assistance to the faithful.

"We encourage everyone to participate and extend support to the faithful devotees. Any support or donation would be highly welcome and appreciated. We encourage all organizations to participate during this Lenten Week," Pablo said. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 20, 2000

JEPA vows to organize business mission to NMI

In a move to help the CNMI recover from the economic slump, the head of the Japan Entrepreneurs and Presidents Association has pledged to organize an investment mission to the CNMI to look into business opportunities on the island. According to Tsuneo Shimoji, the Northern Marianas has a huge potential of attracting businessmen who are planning to set up a retirement haven for Japanese. Mr. Shimoji cited Hawaii as an example where a retirement village for Japanese has been established. But he said the CNMI must offer incentives in order to lure new investors.

CUC revamp hailed

Two members of the Senate welcomed the change in the leadership of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Board, saying it bodes well on the efforts to improve ties between the two agencies which have worsened in recent months due to differences of opinion on the Saipan power project. Under the leadership of new Board Chair Jesus T. Guerrero, they are hoping that the stalled 80-megawatt plant will push through as initially proposed despite earlier decision by CUC to scale down the project. "Whoever chairs it, I think the direction now is to try and work together with the Legislature. That's what we have wanted from the very start," said Senate Floor Leader Pete P. Reyes.

March 20, 2001

Double whammy for local leaders

It's a toss between reviving the local economy and blocking federalization threats. Senate Floor Leader Pete Reyes said Commonwealth leaders should concentrate on alleviating the CNMI's current economic conditions, instead of installing measures that restrict potential growth of the business sector. Members of the business community met with Reyes yesterday to air their sentiments on the apparent disregard by the Senate of proposals to repeal the three-year limit stay imposed on nonresident workers. With the introduction of a new federal takeover bill in the US Senate, business leaders are anxious that the CNMI government would refuse to act on the complete elimination of the three-year limit law.

Chamber to picket Senate to press repeal of 3-year limit

Lawmakers' inaction on the repeal of the three-year limit law yesterday forced the Saipan Chamber of Commerce to picket the legislative building. At least 25 businessmen, led by Chamber President Anthony Pellegrino, went up to Capitol Hill and discussed with Senate Floor Leader Pete Reyes their sentiment on the Senate's seeming procrastination on House Bill 12-137. HB 12-137 seeks to repeal Public Law 11-69 or the three-year limit law in its entirety. "The three-year limit law was passed two years ago just to appease Washington, DC. The situation has changed since then. What I can't understand is why our senators are making a political football out of it. What is there to think about?" the chamber president noted.

March 20, 2002

Governor Manglona, temporarily

Senate President Paul A. Manglona became governor for the day yesterday, after the Commonwealth's two highest officials left the CNMI for separate official businesses off island. Gov. Juan N. Babauta left yesterday morning for Guam on official business, which the administration refused to specify, while Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente left the Commonwealth Monday afternoon for Palau to attend the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Pacific Islands Development Bank. Babauta was expected to return yesterday evening, while Benavente is not expected back until today or Thursday. In the meantime, Manglona was designated as the acting Governor the whole day yesterday.

Legislature begins to move on wage hike

Both chambers of the CNMI Legislature will be coming out with a joint letter this week directing Sen. Ricardo S. Atalig and Rep. Andrew S. Salas to work together and come up with a legislation addressing the minimum wage issue. Senate President Paul A. Manglona said he has already met with House of Representatives Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider and they have agreed to set Atalig and Salas to work on the recommendation of the Special Industry Committee to increase the minimum wage by 22 cents. Salas is chairman of the House Committee on Commerce, while Atalig is chairman of the Senate Committee on Resources, Economic Development and Programs.

2010 CNMI Census forms delivered to mailboxes

The CNMI Local Census Office announced yesterday the delivery of 8,000 CNMI Census forms to all U.S. Post Office box holders in the CNMI.

"It was exciting to see the forms at the Post Office," said Rebecca-Diaz-Cartagena, CNMI Census adviser. "We have been working very hard to have everything begin on time and having the forms delivered today makes this possible. I would like to thank the USPS acting Postmaster Jackie V. Camacho for her support."

The second group of 2010 CNMI Census Forms will be delivered to all private mailbox customers soon.

"Once we have the arrival date confirmed we will make a public announcement. We are grateful to the private mailbox companies for assisting us in getting forms to their customers once they arrive," Diaz Cartagena said.

In addition, there will be several pickup locations for residents who do not have mailboxes or share with another person. Locations will be announced once the forms arrive.

Last week, a letter from U.S. Census Bureau director Robert Groves explained that the official 2010 CNMI Census Forms would be delivered this week. All residents are asked to pick up the form from their box, fill it out and keep it until a census worker visits your household to pick up the completed form.

Training continues this week as staff work on final preparations for the CNMI Census to begin on April 1.

"Our staff are ready for April 1st or D-Day as well call it," said Juan Borja, Local Census office manager. "The many months of preparation have paid off and we are ready to start visiting homes this week and collecting forms from all CNMI residents, both citizens and non-citizens."

Census workers will begin to visit all CNMI villages on April 1 and residents should expect to see a Census worker sometime in April through early May. Census workers will be wearing yellow shirts with the Census logo on the front and back that say "Staff" and have identification badges visible at all times. All Census workers have been instructed to show their badge when approaching homes to identify that they are official CNMI Census staff. Census workers will be in the villages in the evenings and on weekends when the majority of residents will be home.

Multi-language telephone assistance for 2010 CNMI Census forms will be available beginning April 1 by calling 288-3040. For other inquiries, call 288-3023/27. ***(Census)***

USCG enforces int'l fishing regs in South Pacific

APIA, Western Samoa—The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Jarvis arrived Friday in the port of Apia, Western Samoa, as part of a two-month mission to enforce international fishing regulations in the South Pacific.

The crew of the Jarvis is supporting a multinational effort to reduce illegal fishing in the South Pacific, both within individual countries' Exclusive Economic Zones and on the high seas. The Coast Guard cooperates with more than two dozen nations to enforce fisheries laws in the South Pacific; on this patrol, the Jarvis is coordinating directly with law enforcement representatives from French Polynesia, the Cook Islands, the Republic of Kiribati and Australia.

Prior to arrival in Western Samoa, the Jarvis conducted multiple fisheries boardings, both under U.S. authority and in cooperation with an embarked Kiribati ship rider. During these boardings, the crew of the Jarvis identified a range of fisheries and safety violations, ultimately terminating two fishing vessels for operating under especially hazardous conditions. As fines from a single fisheries boarding can reflect more than 1 percent of a Pacific Island nation's yearly gross domestic product, and with commercial fishing the backbone of Pacific Islanders' fragile economies, enforcement of national and international fishing laws is critical to their well being. Additionally, enforcing safety regulations preserves fishermen's lives, reducing the burden of complicated search and rescue operations in remote locations often hundreds of miles from land.

While in Apia, the crew of the Jarvis will host an onboard reception for a panoply of high-ranking Western Samoan military and political officials. The crew is also supporting two community outreach projects in Apia, donating three large pallets of tsunami relief supplies to the Samoan Red Cross in support of the U.S. Navy's Project Handclasp, and working side-by-side with local residents to help Habitat for Humanity build traditional fala houses for families in need.

Following this port call, the crew will return to sea, continuing to leverage international partnerships to enforce fisheries regulations in the South Pacific Ocean. ***(USCG***

USCG

Members of Jarvis boarding team working in conjunction with Kiribati shiprider to enforce fishing laws in the Republic of Kiribati's EEZ.

ZONING OFFICE TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

The Zoning Office will be holding workshops to promote educational awareness of the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law, as well as to seek comments on how the law is working. These workshops are in line with the Zoning Board's goal of addressing the issues and concerns expressed by the community, private sector and the legislature as it prepares for the law's review and update. The public consultation and information campaign will continue over the next month in order to obtain feedback required to update the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law. Please note the following changes made to the dates, times, and target group for the coming days:

Wednesday, March 31, 2010	**9:00 to 10:00am**
	New Business Developers
Wednesday, March 31, 2010	**2:00 to 3:00pm**
	Surveyors
Wednesday, April 7, 2010	**9:00 to 10:00am**
	Engineers/ Architects
Wednesday, April 7, 2010	**2:00 to 3:00pm**
	Adult Businesses
Wednesday, April 14, 2010	**2:00 to 3:00pm**
	Government Agencies

All workshops will be held at the Zoning Office conference room, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan. Anyone with questions about the meetings may contact the Zoning Office by phone at 234-9661 or by e-mail at staff @zoning.gov.mp.

/s/ Herminia M. Fusco, Chairperson

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS ZONING BOARD TO HOST VILLAGE MEETINGS

The Zoning Board and Office will hold a round of village meetings to seek comments about how the current zoning law is working, and will update and revise the current zoning law with the goal of addressing the issues and concerns expressed by the community, private sector and the legislature. The public consultation and information campaign over the next two months will continue in order to obtain feedback required to update the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law. Meeting dates and locations which have been confirmed are:

Tuesday, March 30, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Tanapag Village**
		@ Tanapag Elementary School Cafeteria
Tuesday, April 6, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Kagman and Capitol Hill Villages**
		@ Kagman Community Center
Thursday, April 8, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**San Vicente Village**
		@ San Vicente Elementary School Cafeteria
Thursday, April 15, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Dandan Village**
		@ Dandan Elementary School Cafeteria
Tuesday, April 20, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**San Roque Village**
		@ GTC Elementary School Cafeteria

The Board encourages anyone with suggestions that might improve the language of the law, or changes to the zone boundaries to attend. Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the meeting. Written suggestions may also be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office no later than 4:30 pm, April 30, 2010 or they may be submitted via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

Anyone with questions about the meetings may contact the Zoning Office by phone at 234-9661 or by e-mail at staff @zoning.gov.mp.

/s/ Herminia M. Fusco, Chairperson

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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MEMBER
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EDITORIAL

A return to rules

Hard on the heels of health care reform comes an equally big task: rewriting rules for the nation's largest financial institutions. Two years after the federal government spent $30 billion to bail out Bear Stearns—the first casualty of the financial calamity—it's time.

But a bill that passed the Senate Banking Committee on a party-line vote Monday should be strengthened. Depositors and investors were wounded when credit froze in the fall of 2008, and so far nothing has been done to modify the rules that allowed it to happen. Chief among them: institutions that are too big to fail.

The bill, which was sponsored by Banking Committee Chairman Chris Dodd, D-Conn., would attack the problem by establishing a panel of regulators that could insist that any institutions seen as systemically important be regulated by the Federal Reserve. If such companies get in trouble, the Fed, along with the Federal Deposit Insurance Co. and Department of the Treasury, could seek an orderly liquidation of the company's assets. Large financial companies would have to pay into a "resolution fund." The process, while sensible, also seems clunky and could be improved.

The bill also sets up a consumer protection agency housed at the Fed. This seems like half a loaf after President Barack Obama promised a freestanding consumer watchdog. The bill attempts to insulate the agency within the Fed, but there is reason to be concerned about its independence. It should be autonomous and have the ability to enforce its rules.

The bill tries, and mostly fails, to regulate the derivatives market. Until these investments are required to trade on transparent and regulated exchanges, they will cause problems that will be hard to identify until it's too late.

Finally, the bill would codify the so-called Volcker rule, named for former Fed chief Paul Volcker, which would ban the big banks from investing in or sponsoring a hedge fund or a private equity fund or from operating proprietary trading in their own accounts. The rule would allow for some daylight between investment banks and commercial banks and, if implemented, would be a good thing. But the Dodd bill calls for a six-month study of the idea followed by three months of implementation. If it's such a good idea, the government should move much faster.

The Dodd bill seems well-intentioned but weak. Surely, after witnessing the near collapse of the American financial system, Congress can do better.

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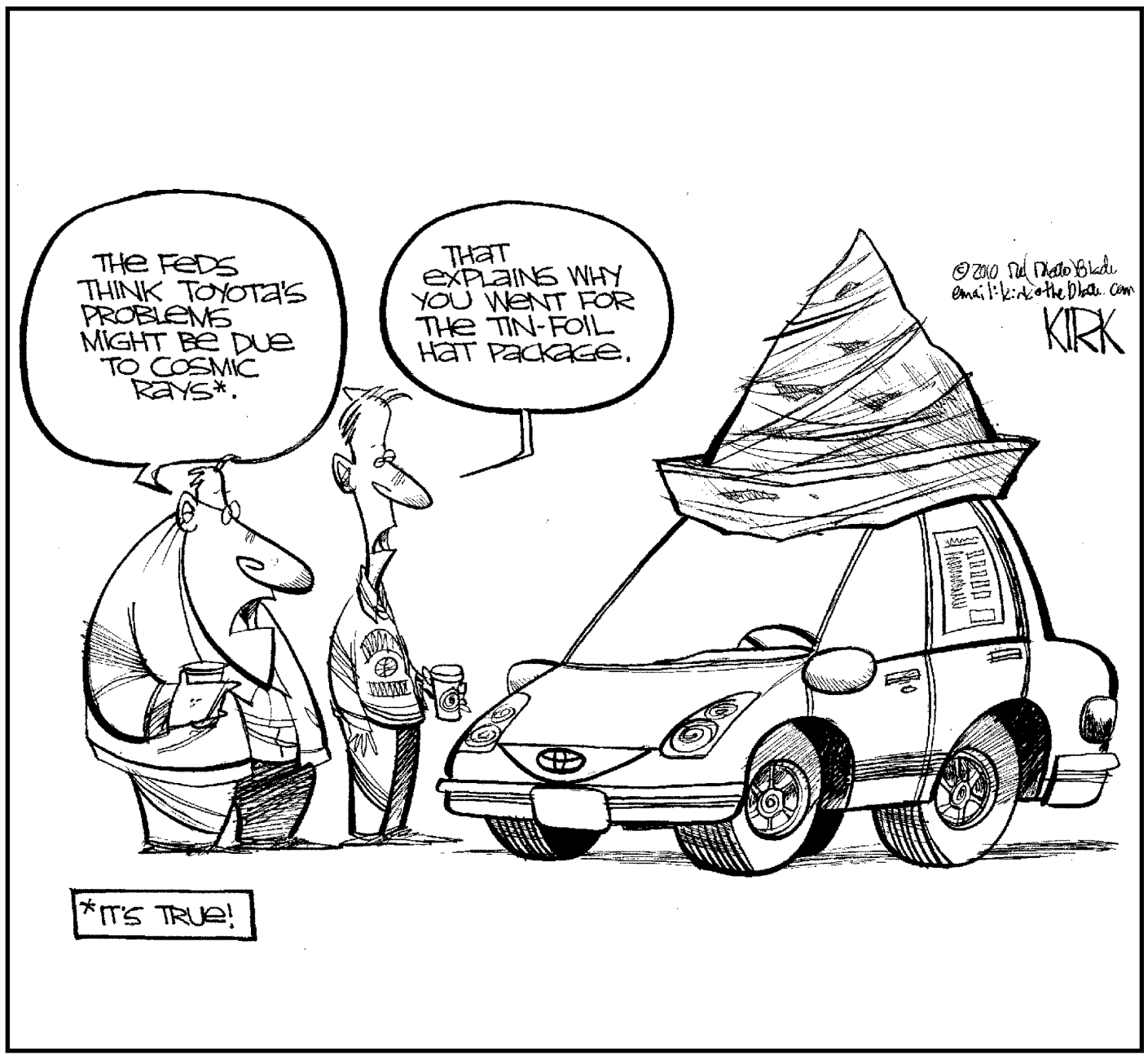
THE FEDS THINK TOYOTA'S PROBLEMS MIGHT BE DUE TO COSMIC RAYS*.
THAT EXPLAINS WHY YOU WENT FOR THE TIN-FOIL HAT PACKAGE.
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KIRK
*IT'S TRUE!

GOP eventually will praise health reform bill

By REP. JIM MCDERMOTT
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Wash., is one of the few physicians in the U.S. Congress. Readers may write to him at 1035 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. This essay is available to McClatchy-Tribune News Service subscribers. McClatchy-Tribune did not subsidize the writing of this column; the opinions are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the views of McClatchy-Tribune or its editors.

I recently read a story about a Republican member of the House of Representatives who was running for the Senate. He said the newest Democratic proposal to improve America's health care system was "socialized medicine." And though you might have seen those words appear in any Republican statement released within the last few hours, the year I'm talking about is 1964, the candidate was George H.W. Bush, and the program was Medicare.

Funny that his very own son, former President George W. Bush, called Medicare "one of the most important contributions to seniors' health care ever enacted." For decades, we've seen Democrats pass successful programs that Republicans lambast as the end of civilization, only to watch these programs become wildly successful and popular.

In 1935, when people were struggling through a depression and millions of Americans needed additional support, Democrats delivered with Social Security.

In 1965, when many of the nation's seniors couldn't afford basic medical care, Democrats delivered with Medicare. And in 2010, when insurance companies made billions in profit as they watched 45,000 Americans die each year simply because they didn't have health insurance, Democrats delivered with health care reform.

Much has been said about what health care reform will do to Democrats on Election Day in November.

Republicans have charged that the American people didn't want this bill. And if this legislation actually looked anything like what Republicans have described it as, I wouldn't want it, either. But as the dust settles in the wake of the bill's passage, Americans will now have the chance to actually see what's in the legislation and how it will help them and their families. I must say, there's quite a lot to be proud of in this bill.

Over the next few months, it will give small businesses tax credits so that employers can afford to give coverage to their employees. It will provide free preventive care to seniors so that they get to the doctor before they get sick. It will end the practice of rescissions, which insurers have used to drop coverage for sick people.

As other reforms get implemented over the next few years, 32 million uninsured Americans will receive health coverage. We'll see the creation of health insurance exchanges, which will make it simpler for consumers to understand and purchase policies, increase competition among insurance companies and drive down costs for policyholders. And it does all of this and a lot more while reducing the deficit by $130 billion over the next 10 years by reining in waste, fraud and abuse.

Republicans are already talking about repealing the legislation. Rep. Michelle Bachmann, R-Minn., is already circulating a letter to her colleagues saying that since they couldn't kill it, they are going to have to undo it.

Want to take away health coverage from 32 million Americans? Be my guest. Want to tell insurance companies that they can start denying health coverage to people with pre-existing conditions again? Have at it. But between now and November, I think many Americans will have the chance to see all the beneficial things in this legislation without having to listen to the deafening clamor of the Republican misinformation machine.

Now, might the Democratic Party lose a few seats? Absolutely. But I highly doubt that it's going to be the massacre Republicans are hoping for.

Perhaps Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, best summed up the Democrats' prospects in November: "If they (pass health care reform), of course, you're going to have a very rough time having a two-party system in this country because almost everybody's going to say, 'All we ever were, all we ever are, all we ever hope to be depends on the Democratic Party.'"

Couldn't have said it better myself.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

More relief for surviving spouses

IMMIGRATION FORUM

By MAYA KARA and BRUCE MAILMAN
Special to the *Saipan Tribune*

Maya Kara is a native of Hungary and comes to the practice of law by way of her interest in Asian history. Bruce Mailman is a native of Bakersfield, California and was a private investigator in California prior to becoming a lawyer. Both have lived and practiced law in the CNMI for over 20 years, Maya in government service and Bruce in private practice. They are married and are partners in the law firm of Mailman & Kara, LLC in Garapan, Saipan.

In our Feb. 9 column we discussed the change in federal immigration law regarding surviving spouses of U.S. citizens. Under the old law, if the couple had been married at least two years, then the surviving spouse could self-petition for U.S. permanent residence. But if the USC spouse died before the second wedding anniversary, the survivor was, in most cases, out of luck.

Under the new law, the two-year requirement has been erased, and a surviving spouse can self-petition for permanent residence at any time during the two years immediately after the USC spouse's death; the same is true for qualifying children and stepchildren. If the USC spouse died at any time before October 28, 2009, the effective date of the amendment to the Immigration & Nationality Act (INA), then the surviving spouse or child has until October 28, 2011 to self-petition.

Who Benefits from the Widow(er)s Amendment?

In our February column, we said that the effect of the INA amendment only benefited widows and widowers who had been married less than two years. We based this on the USCIS's Dec. 2, 2009 guidance, which stated in part that the new amendment applies "to any alien whose spouse died before October 28, 2009, and who had a Form I-130 pending on October 28, 2009. If no Form I-130 was pending, then an alien whose spouse died before October 28, 2009, *and before the second anniversary of their marriage*, may file a visa petition…" We understood this to exclude widow(er)s married more than two years.

But here's the language of the amendment itself, which says nothing about any qualifying length of the marriage:

In the case of an alien who was the spouse of a citizen of the United States and was not legally separated from the citizen at the time of the citizen's death, the alien (and each child of the alien) shall be considered...to remain an immediate relative after the date of the citizen's death but only if the spouse files a petition...within 2 years of such date and only until the spouse remarries.

A later section of the Dec. 2 guidance is also silent regarding the length of the marriage. Fortunately, earlier this month the USCIS issued a clarifying five-page "fact sheet," which does not distinguish between surviving spouses who were married less, or more, than two years before the death of the USC spouse. The fact sheet can be found on the USCIS Web site, at http://tinyurl.com/y8p3q5e. The fact sheet states that "widow(er)s of citizens who died before October 28, 2009, but who did not have a Form I-130 [petition for alien relative] pending...have until October 28, 2011 to file a Form I-360, Petition for Amerasian, Widow(er), or Special Immigrant, for themselves and their unmarried children." We therefore now believe that the Dec. 2 guidance was unintentionally confusing, and that USCIS intended the quoted sentence to mean that widow(er)s whose USC spouses died prior to the second anniversary of their marriage are now included in the group of surviving spouses affected by the amendment, and not that the amendment only applied to them.

The USCIS fact sheet discusses the treatment of surviving spouses and their children in a number of scenarios: what to do if the USC spouse died with a Form I-130 pending (generally, it will be adjudicated as an I-360); Form I-130 approved (automatic conversion to an approved I-360); Form I-485 (application to register permanent residence or adjust status) pending (reopened if applicant remains in US; if not, I-130 automatically converts to approved I-360, and widow(er) applies for immigrant visa abroad); no application pending; widow(er)s granted "deferred action" in removal (deportation) after USC spouse's death (survivor files I-485 and may now seek employment authorization); surviving spouses in removal proceedings (seek legal advice); previously removed or voluntarily departed survivors (USCIS may allow reapplication and "will generally exercise discretion favorably if right conditions are met); and unnamed members of the "Hootkins class" of class action plaintiffs whose petitions were previously denied by the Guam USCIS office, among others (contact denying USCIS office and request a new decision.)

What Do You Need to Prove?

The surviving spouse will still need to demonstrate the same facts as any marriage-based applicant for permanent residence, and a bit more:

- Legal marriage to the USC;
- The marriage was bona fide; that is, not made for immigration benefits;
- Widow(er) has not remarried;
- Widow(er) and USC spouse were not legally separated or divorced when the USC spouse died;
- Widow(er) is otherwise admissible as a US immigrant;
- If adjusting status (through USCIS, rather than through a US consulate), that the widow(er) is eligible for adjustment "and merits a favorable exercise of discretion";
- For the applicant's children to qualify as his/her derivative beneficiaries, that they are unmarried and were under 21 when the original petition was filed;
- For applicants who are child of a deceased USC, but not themselves USCs, that they are the widow(er)s stepchildren (parents married while stepchild was under 18) or adopted children (adopted before age of 16).

What Don't You Need to Prove?

The surviving spouse will not have to file some of the forms applicable to most other family-based applicants for permanent residence:

- The widow(er) and accompanying children do not have to file Form I-864 (affidavit of support)
- The widow(er) of a marriage of less than two years do not have to file Form I-751 (petition to remove conditions on residence).

What Does It Mean for CNMI Surviving Spouses?

This is big news. We believe that there are many more surviving spouses of USCs than is generally realized, who are now eligible to apply for US permanent residence. This is a result of the interplay (or lack thereof) between former US and former CNMI immigration law.

Under the CNMI system, a surviving spouse of a USC remained an "immediate relative" entitled to "IR" status for life, provided he or she did not remarry. CNMI case law confirmed in the early 1990s that the status was considered permanent; in one case, the survivor left the CNMI for several years, and successfully reclaimed her IR status—and the accompanying privilege of living and working freely in the CNMI—after being away in her native country for several years.

Under the INA before Oct. 28, 2009, a CNMI-resident surviving spouse (who had been married to the USC at least two years) could apply for permanent residence but, once permanent residence was granted, he or she to move within the U.S. borders controlled by INS and, later, Customs & Border Protection. Otherwise, the survivor was considered "outside" the U.S. for immigration purposes, and would eventually lose his or her status as a permanent resident.

That meant a move to Guam or any other part of the U.S. except American Samoa. The survivor would then have to remain resident "inside" the U.S. for years, until he or she became a U.S. citizen. For too many surviving spouses, typically widows in our experience, this would have meant uprooting their lives, and their children's lives; moving away from their families, or the families in which they had been members for many years; leaving their jobs. In short, leaving their lives—and for what, given that the CNMI permanently welcomed them? This was an especially difficult decision for older survivors, whose job skills might not have been marketable in a new place.

Now, however, the considerations are exactly reversed. These same surviving spouses now must apply for U.S. permanent residence to avoid having to leave their families and their lives. Fortunately, the new widow(er)s amendment allows them to do that.

Remember: A surviving spouse whose USC husband or wife died before Oct. 28, 2009, must make (or revive) his or her application for permanent residence by Oct. 28, 2011. Anyone whose USC spouse passed away after Oct. 28, 2009 must apply within the standard two years after the USC spouse's date of death. It doesn't matter, anymore, how long the marriage lasted—only that it was a real marriage.

The information contained in this column is intended as general information only, and not as individual legal advice. Readers should obtain professional legal advice before taking action with respect to their individual situations. Readers may submit questions regarding federalization or immigration issues to the authors by email to lexmarianas@pticom.com. Readers may also e-mail written questions through the Saipan Tribune *at editor@saipantribune.com.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Health care bill won't benefit NMI

Do you actually think the United States is going to increase medical funding for the good people of the CNMI? No, it is going to be the exact opposite. Over 16 million Americans are going to lose their Medicare and Medicaid. This is through doctors and pharmacies being unable to afford to aid those enrollees. Walgreens and Walmart have already stopped taking new applicants. Not only that, Congress is instructing the IRS to fine people who don't obtain health insurance.

This fine cannot be inflicted on the hard working people of the CNMI. How can some of the citizens afford health insurance on the CNMI when the CNMI Legislature just voted to cut hours back? It voted to cut all government employees' hours back. PSS is currently looking at possibly losing $45 million in federal grants. How can the great teachers on this island afford health care now? They can't when they lose more money per pay period than covers their insurance policy.

What about our children and their future? Does anyone care about them? The answer is yes, the brave concerned eight Republicans that voted for not cutting back hours.

Now the CNMI needs to cut back another $9 million. I have a good way to save money: All the senators and congressmen that voted to cut hours and the school budget need to immediately terminate their positions along with all their staff. It's a start.

No, this health care bill doesn't affect the CNMI at all. The bill that was passed by the Democrats in Washington is being challenged by over 38 states for its constitutionality because it forces people to buy something they don't want. Big brotha' is coming.

Keith Brooks
Dandan, Saipan

Congratulation!

My congratulations to all the participants in this year's "Parade of Books", especially the students from Garapan Elementary School with their superior performance(s) in attaining the grand prize for 2010. I believe this not only exemplifies the diligence of the GES students working together as a team over a three-month period, but also to the many hours spent by the individual students after schools hours at home. This can only be attributed to the motivation and confidence instilled into them through their teachers and support of their parents. A special "well done" goes to teacher-coaches Lori Terre, Claire Dela Cruz, Lorraine Arriola and the entire GES entire teaching and administrative staff. The community should be proud and further recognize once again the professionalism and commitment of PSS, as well as the continued support of the Saipan Rotary Club for their initiative in bringing this type of educational program to fruition.

Owen A. Rumley
Kannat Tabla, Sipan

Problem + solution = Resolutions

This letter is addressed to those who always complain and are blind in trying to maintain a cost that we cannot afford. Even in the State of Hawaii's Public School System, they have furlough Fridays as there is not enough money, and this started since last year. If Hawaii is practicing furlough Fridays, I believe that the situation is also probably happening even in the mainland. So, this is to let other parents know that we are not alone.

If our government budget goes down, we will eventually all go down. It is not right at this time for us to complain, but to contribute ideas and solutions on how to save money and at same time maintain our budget so that it will last. It is a time to watch our costs carefully and make our budget last till we can make more.

One way of finding solutions is to talk to the Hawaii Public School System and ask how they are implementing this furlough Fridays. Another way is to identify the problems and find solutions to it. We have identified too many problems already, but not one has offered a legitimate solution.Identify the cost needs and how to make more money. Instead of assuming what we might lose, why don't we look into how to make more money for our expenses. It is like working and then planning how you would spend your budget, instead of quitting your job and keep spending your budget.

Winnie Atalig
San Jose Tinian

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with scattered showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

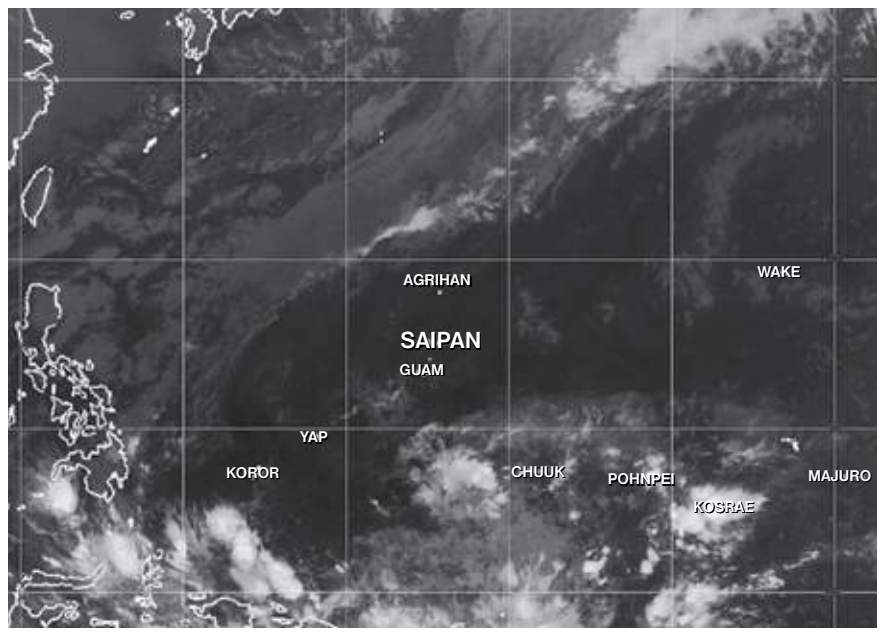
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲85	▼77
Palau	Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Chuuk	Thundershowers	▲90	▼80
Pohnpei	Thundershowers	▲85	▼80
Kosrae	Thundershowers	▲85	▼80
Majuro	Showers	▲86	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲68	▼62
Beijing	Cloudy	▲63	▼38
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲78	▼63
Honolulu	Windy	▲82	▼71
London	Showers	▲49	▼38
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲66	▼53
Manila	Thundershowers	▲90	▼75
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲76	▼52
Miami	Cloudy	▲75	▼55
New York	Rain	▲52	▼44
Osaka	Cloudy	▲60	▼39
Paris	Showers	▲53	▼39
Pusan	Showers	▲54	▼46
Rome	Windy	▲67	▼49
Salem	Rain	▲47	▼38
San Francisco	Showers	▲57	▼46
Seoul	Showers	▲53	▼43
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	▲59	▼40
Washington, DC	Rain	▲55	▼46

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A stationary front extends southwestward from 25N148E to a circulation centered near 19N135E then south-southwestward to end near 14N130E to the east of 137E. Scattered showers are found along and up to 90 miles northwest of the stationary front. A surface trough extends southeastward from 5N130E through a weak circulation centered south of Koror at 4N136E to end at EQ150E. Scattered showers are located between 5N and the equator from 130E to 142E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms in several areas. The areas include Chuuk between 4N and 8N from 145E to 154E south of Chuuk and Pohnpei between the equator and 4N from 150E to 160E and finally over Kosrae between the equator and 6N from 160E to 165E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:37 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
7:31 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet
2:05 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet
8:13 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:14 AM	6:29 PM
Wednesday	6:14 AM	6:29 PM
Thursday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:12 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:11 AM	6:30 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:38 PM	5:52 AM
Wednesday	7:38 PM	6:37 AM
Thursday	8:37 PM	7:25 AM
Friday	9:37 PM	8:14 AM
Saturday	10:35 PM	9:06 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 30, 2010

DEPARTURES

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	5:00am	5:30am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09603	3:05pm	3:55pm	Daily
C09605	6:35pm	7:25pm	Daily
C09599	9:35pm	10:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

DL640	8:40am	11:25am	1, 3, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	5:55am	8:35am	Daily
DL640/646	8:40am	1:55pm	1, 3, 7 via NGO
DL297	3:35pm	6:15pm	Daily
DL289	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

0Z608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

0Z604	2:20am	6:10am	1
0Z604	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
0Z119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
0Z606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

0Z604/701	2:20am	11:50am	1 via ICN
0Z604/701	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
0Z608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
0Z9317/891	4:25am	9:45am	6 via GUM
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM
C09603/933	3:15pm	8:40pm	Daily via GUM
0Z606/703	3:20pm	10:55pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

0Z604/721	2:20am	11:45pm	1 via ICN
0Z604/721	2:50am	11:45pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
0Z606/749	3:30pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

0Z119	4:00am	6:40Am	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	6:30pm	7:00pm	4, 7

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	Daily
C09602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	5:10pm	6:00pm	Daily
C09606	8:10pm	9:00pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

DL641	9:10pm	1:40am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
DL287/641	6:35pm	1:40am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

0Z607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

0Z605	9:00am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7
0Z120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
0Z603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
0Z603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

0Z706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
C0890/9606	10:55am	9:00pm	6 via GUM
0Z702/603	1:10pm	1:40am+1	7 via ICN
0Z702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:00pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:00pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via GUM
C0934/9596	10:55pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
0Z704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

0Z724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
0Z750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
0Z722/603	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
0Z722/603	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

0Z120	9:55am	2:20am+1	Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Hundreds take part in Rota Agriculture Fair

In honor of the patron saint of farmers, San Isidro, Rota hosted an Agriculture Fair on March 19, 2010, that saw hundreds of island residents participating in the special event.

Held for the first time since three years ago, the Agriculture Fair was scheduled to coincide with the San Isidro Fiesta.

About 19 farmers and graziers competed for monetary prizes, while community members and schools took part in several special events.

The High School Color Guard presented the flags, while the Rota Junior High School performed a number of traditional dances.

The students had a great day of activities such as relay race and other fun activities.

Department of Lands and Natural Resources' Forestry, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the Northern Marianas College's CREES hosted informational booths for public education. ***(PR)***

This large bull was the centerpiece of one farmer's entry.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Proud farmers show off their produce.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Various kinds of pepper are on display at the Rota Agriculture Fair.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Different kinds of citrus fruits competed for attention.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rota's Agriculture Fair showcased several farm animals, including these prize pigs.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Delta Airlines is 'title sponsor' of MMAC

Delta Airlines has become a "title sponsor" of the Marianas March Against Cancer for the fourth consecutive year, according to an announcement issued Friday by the 2010 Marianas March Against Cancer committee.

Delta Airlines has donated a free ticket to anywhere in Asia that Delta flies, a free ticket to anywhere in the United States or Canada that Delta flies, plus several travel credit vouchers that can be used toward the purchase of a Delta Airlines ticket.

The 2010 MMAC committee has distributed raffle tickets to the 2010 MMAC teams to sell to the general public for only $5. The 2010 MMAC teams are Ahu, Bodig, Bank of Guam/Garapan Elementary School, Docomo Pacific/Koblerville Elementary School, Grace Christian Academy, Hinemlo (DPH), IT&E/Saipan Southern High School, Marriage Encounter, Pacific Islands Club, Take Care/FHP, Tan Holdings and TSA Guardians. Additional tickets can be purchased from Tina Sablan of the Commonwealth Cancer Association. Sablan can be reached at 682-0050 or 285-3935 or via email at cca@ccamarianas.org. All funds raised will be spent locally on cancer patient assistance, cancer awareness programs and other cancer related services.

Delta Air Lines is the world's largest airline in terms of passenger traffic and fleet size. It is the only U.S. carrier to serve every continent except Antarctica. Delta is headquartered in Atlanta where it operates the world's busiest airline hub. Delta also operates hubs in Detroit, Cincinnati, New York City (JFK), Salt Lake City, Memphis, Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Tokyo/Narita and Amsterdam. For more information on Delta Airlines visit www.delta.com. ***(PR)***

Bridge Capital increases prizes for K-12 division in art competition

Because of the enthusiastic response from K-12 student artists and teachers to the Bridge Capital, LLC Art Competition, Bridge Capital, LLC has decided to increase the K-12 prizes for the winning student entries for each grade from $25 to $100. In addition, as previously announced, the winning student classroom will receive a $100 school supply gift certificate.

Official rules and entry forms can be found at Bridge Capital, LLC's Web site: www.bccnmi.com/artcontest.

Bridge Capital, LLC is an international investment banking and asset management company located in the CNMI. The company is involved in a wide range of community activities and makes significant contributions to non-profit and charitable organizations serving the islands. Bridge Capital is committed to being a good corporate citizen and a partner in making the CNMI the best it can be**.** ***(PR)***

Military training on FDM ongoing

The U.S military will be conducting military training at the Farallon de Mendenilla and at the W-517- irregular polygon, south of Guam. The schedule date and time is as follows:

Farallon De Mendenilla

- March 30, 6am-11:30pm
- March 31-April 1, 6am-11pm
- April 2, 6am-11pm

W-517- irregular polygon-south of Guam

- March 29-30, 2010, 9:15am-1pm

The general location for this activity will be at W-517, an irregular polygon comprising 14,000 nautical miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters to the Farallon De Mendenilla Training Area (R7201). W-517 supports surface and aerial gunnery, missile laser exercise. This will affect fishing in the vicinity of Santa Rosa and Galvez Bank.

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, the Emergency Management Office is strongly advising the public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators, to stay away from these areas during the time and date indicated.

For more information, contact the EMO's Operations Section at telephone numbers 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF Marine CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0 or dial CNMI 211. ***(PR)***

'Back to Sumay Day' for former Sumay residents

SANTA RITA, Guam—In a joint effort between the mayors of Santa Rita, Agat, Piti and Capt. Scott Galbreaith , commanding officer of Naval Base Guam, the location of the prewar village of Sumay on NBG will be the site of a "Back To Sumay" celebration for former Sumay residents and their descendants.

Planned by Mayors Ben Gumataotao, Piti, Dale Alvarez, Santa Rita, and Carol Tayama, Agat, the event from 10am to 3pm, Sunday, April 11, will feature former Sumay residents sharing stories of pre-war Sumay with their descendants.

According to Piti Mayor Gumataotao, Toni Ramirez and other island historians will offer an overview of the village history and encourage the *man'amko* present to offer their own personal histories. Some photos of old Sumay will also be on display.

Sumay was one if the island's most prosperous villages with a population of 2,000 in the late 1930s. The proximity of Sumay to the Pan American Airways Apra Harbor water landing site and the Pan American Skyways Hotel, the Trans-Pacific Cable Station and the US Marine Corps Barracks contributed to the village's prosperity. The location of the war-destroyed village was incorporated in 1944/45 into the construction of the new Naval Operating Base, now Naval Base Guam.

The mayors of Santa Rita, Agat, and Piti will provide an Invitation Pass for former Sumay residents and their descendants for access onto Naval Base Guam . The passes can be obtained at the mayors' offices after April 1. For more information call the Mayors of Santa Rita, Agat or Piti. ***(PR)***

Business

Geely to buy Volvo from Ford for $1.8 billion

STOCKHOLM (AP)—Zhejiang Geely Holding Group signed a binding deal Sunday to buy Ford Motor Co.'s Volvo Cars unit for $1.8 billion, representing a coup for the independent Chinese automaker which is aiming to expand in Europe.

The purchase gives Geely a European luxury car brand with a reputation for safety and quality at a time when China, which last year surpassed the U.S. as the world's largest car market, is eager to improve its competitiveness by acquiring foreign automotive brands that might help it improve its technology and expand into overseas markets.

The price, which includes a $200 million note with the remainder to be paid out in cash, is far less than the $6.45 billion Ford paid for the Swedish automaker in 1999. The U.S. automaker has been trying to sell Volvo since late 2008 to focus its resources on managing its core Ford, Lincoln and Mercury brands.

"We think it's a fair price for a good business, and yes, we're happy with the deal we've achieved with Geely," said Ford Chief Financial Officer Lewis Booth on Sunday at a news conference at Volvo Cars headquarters in Goteborg, on Sweden's west coast. Booth added that his company believes that, under Geely, "Volvo can continue to build its business and return to profitability."

AP

In this image released by Volvo, Li Shufu, chairman of Zhejiang Geely Holding Group Company Ltd, and Lewis Booth, CFO Ford Motor Company, sign the Stock Purchase Agreement at the Volvo plant and headquarter in Torslanda, Gothenburg, Sweden, Sunday March 28, 2010 committing the Chinese company to purchase the Swedish car maker from Ford.

The agreement was signed by Booth and Geely's chairman, Li Shufu, and witnessed by Li Yizhong, the Chinese minister of industry and information technology, as well as Swedish Minister for Enterprise and Energy Maud Olofsson.

In a statement, Geely said it has secured all the financing necessary to complete the deal, as well as "significant working capital facilities to fund Volvo Cars' ongoing business." The sale is expected to be completed in the third quarter, subject to regulatory approvals.

The deal also covers further agreements on intellectual property rights, supply, and research and development arrangements between Volvo Cars, Geely and Ford. The U.S. automaker has committed to provide engineering support, information technology, access to tooling for common parts and certain other services for a transition period to smooth the separation.

Li, whose comments were translated by an interpreter, described the deal as "a milestone" for both Geely and Volvo, adding that his group will make a Volvo CEO public "in due course."

Geely said it aims to keep Volvo's existing manufacturing facilities in Sweden and Belgium, but that it also will explore manufacturing opportunities in China. Volvo Cars will remain separate from Geely's other operations, with its own Sweden-based management team and a new board of directors, the company said.

Take two: Gov't tries new fix for mortgage crisis

WASHINGTON (AP)—The government's bold new plan to stem the foreclosure crisis aims to succeed where previous efforts have fallen flat. Yet just as before, the odds are long, and many struggling borrowers won't qualify.

In theory, the effort unveiled Friday would help millions of troubled homeowners who owe more on their mortgages than their homes are worth, or who are jobless and need a break on their payments.

But it depends on cooperation from investors and bankers, many of whom have been locked in disputes over whether to reduce the debt owed by homeowners.

And just like the bank bailouts, this rescue plan poses risks. If it doesn't slow the wave of foreclosures or if home prices nosedive, the tentative recovery in the housing market could fizzle.

The Obama administration says the plan will help stabilize the real estate market by keeping many borrowers out of foreclosure. If it succeeds, the plan would limit damage to the overall economy.

Health overhaul likely to strain doctor shortage

WASHINGTON (AP)—Better beat the crowd and find a doctor.

Primary care physicians already are in short supply in parts of the country, and the landmark health overhaul that will bring them millions more newly insured patients in the next few years promises extra strain.

The new law goes beyond offering coverage to the uninsured, with steps to improve the quality of care for the average person and help keep us well instead of today's seek-care-after-you're-sick culture. To benefit, you'll need a regular health provider.

Yet recently published reports predict a shortfall of roughly 40,000 primary care doctors over the next decade, a field losing out to the better pay, better hours and higher profile of many other specialties. Provisions in the new law aim to start reversing that tide, from bonus payments for certain physicians to expanded community health centers that will pick up some of the slack.

A growing movement to change how primary care is practiced may do more to help with the influx. Instead of the traditional 10-minutes-with-the-doc-style office, a "medical home" would enhance access with a doctor-led team of nurses, physician assistants and disease educators working together; these teams could see more people while giving extra attention to those who need it most.

"A lot of things can be done in the team fashion where you don't need the patient to see the physician every three months," says Dr. Sam Jones of Fairfax Family Practice Centers, a large Virginia group of 10 primary care offices outside the nation's capital that is morphing into this medical home model.

Grasshopper outlook strikes fear on Western range

NEWCASTLE, Wyo. (AP)—Grasshopper infestations have taken on mythic tones here on the arid prairie of northeastern Wyoming—they blanket highways, eat T-shirts off clotheslines and devour nearly every scrap of vegetation on ranches and farms.

The myth may come closer to reality this summer than at any time in decades in several states in the West and the Plains.

A federal survey of adult grasshoppers last fall indicated that parts of Wyoming, Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Nebraska and Idaho could face costly grasshopper infestations this summer.

Ranchers and farmers as well as federal and municipal pest control agencies are praying for well-timed cool and wet weather to stifle the young grasshoppers when they hatch around May and June.

AP

In this July 16, 2009 photo, an adult male migratory grasshopper is seen near near Wheatland, Wyo, in this photo provided by the university of Wyoming.

In the meantime, they're scrambling to line up the millions of dollars it will cost to battle an outbreak with aerial insecticide.

"They're grass eaters," said Tom Wright, a rancher near Newcastle in northeast Wyoming about 20 miles from the South Dakota border. "They'll eat the leaves and leave the stem. And they will eat the stems finally.

"When they're really thick, people say they'll eat T-shirts on a line," he said as he recalled a time in the mid-1980s when the grasshoppers were so thick that you couldn't put your hand on the shady side of a fence post without squashing one.

Grasshoppers are found across the United States, but outbreaks of pest species are most common in the Plains and Western states. Different species range from a length of under an inch to more than 3 inches.

They provide some ecological benefits, serving as a food source for other animals. However, some pest species are capable of eating their body weight daily in vegetation and can waste up to six times more by dropping forage to the ground. Making matters worse is the prevalence of migratory species in the latest surveys—insects that can fly 60 miles in a day.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Shell sells New Zealand gas stations for $490M

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Royal Dutch Shell PLC is selling its century-old distribution and retail business in New Zealand, including hundreds of gas stations and a share in the country's only oil refinery, for 696 million New Zealand dollars ($490 million). Europe's largest oil company said Monday the assets will be sold to New Zealand infrastructure investor Infratil Ltd. and the Guardians of New Zealand Superannuation, as part of its plan to reduce its exposure to refining and focus on growth markets. Infratil Ltd. said the agreement, scheduled to be completed Thursday, is conditional on the drawdown of bank facilities, which have been signed, and finalizing certain third-party consents.

Oil above $80 as traders look to US jobs data

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices rose above $80 a barrel Monday in Asia as investors look to a key U.S. jobs report later this week for clues about the outlook for consumer spending. Benchmark crude for May delivery was up 46 cents to $80.46 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 53 cents to settle at $80 on Friday. Oil has drifted in the low $80s for two weeks as investors mull whether slack crude demand from the U.S. and Europe justify higher prices.

Asian stock markets mixed in early trading

TOKYO (AP)—Asian markets were mixed early Monday after shares in New York on Friday gave back most of their gains on concerns over whether a recent rally could be sustained. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 stock average was down 57.24 points, or 0.5 percent, at 10,939.13 while South Korea's Kospi fell 0.57 points, or less than 0.1 percent, to 1,697.22. Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 143.22, or 0.7 percent, to 21,200.35. In Japan, several big-name electronics companies suffered losses. Casio Computer Co. was down 3.3 while Nintendo fell 2.8 percent.

Nation

Official: Gun charges after FBI raids in Midwest

AP

Michigan State Police guard a home, center rear, on Tomer Street in Clayton, Mich. on Sunday afternoon March 28, 2010 after an FBI raid of a home of a suspected militia leader.

ADRIAN, Mich. (AP)—The FBI said Sunday that agents conducted weekend raids in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio and arrested at least three people, and a militia leader in Michigan said the target of at least one of the raids was a Christian militia group.

Federal warrants were sealed, but a federal law enforcement official speaking on condition of anonymity said some of those arrested face gun charges and officials are pursuing other suspects.

FBI spokeswoman Sandra Berchtold said there had been activity in two southeast Michigan counties near the Ohio state line. She wouldn't say whether they were tied to the raids in the other states.

FBI spokesman Scott Wilson in Cleveland said agents arrested two people Saturday after raids in two Ohio towns. A third arrest made in northeast Illinois on Sunday stemmed from a raid Saturday just over the border in northwest Indiana, both part of an ongoing investigation led by the FBI in Michigan, according to a statement from agents in Illinois.

George Ponce, 18, who works at a pizzeria next door to a home raided in Hammond, Ind., said he and a few co-workers stepped outside for a break Saturday night and saw a swarm of law enforcement.

"I heard a yell, 'Get back inside!' and saw a squad member pointing a rifle at us," Ponce said. "They told us the bomb squad was going in, sweeping the house looking for bombs."

He said another agent was in the bushes near the house, and law enforcement vehicles were "all over." He estimated that agents took more than two dozen guns from the house.

Michael Lackomar, a spokesman for the Southeast Michigan Volunteer Militia, said one of his team leaders got a frantic phone call Saturday evening from members of Hutaree, a Christian militia group, who said their property in southwest Michigan was being raided by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

"They said they were under attack by the ATF and wanted a place to hide," Lackomar said. "My team leader said, 'no thanks.' "

The team leader was cooperating with the FBI on Sunday, Lackomar said. He said SMVM wasn't affiliated with Hutaree, which states on its Web site to be "prepared to defend all those who belong to Christ and save those who aren't."

As economy sours, vendors crowd into Venice Beach

ANGELES (AP)—Sand and surf are the least of the attractions making Venice Beach one of Los Angeles' top tourist draws.

On summer weekends, some 150,000 exhibitionists and gawkers flock to the neighborhood to see and be seen in a Bohemian rhapsody of bongo-bangers, dreadlocked artists and acrobatic gymnasts.

In recent months, though, that free-wheeling hippie circus has gotten edgy thanks to a stubbornly sour economy heightening competition for the 200 peddler spaces along the 1.5-mile long asphalt strip bordering the beach.

That has longtime storeowners and artists steamed, and residents in the rapidly gentrifying neighborhood clamoring for a clamp down on the increased noise and transients.

"It's become a real free-for-all, really aggressive," said Therese Dietlin, who has distributed alternative political literature for nine years on the boardwalk, which is lined with cafes, medical marijuana clinics and souvenir shops.

AP

In this photo taken Feb. 12, 2010, a fortune-teller and artist sells her artwork at the Ocean Front Walk in the Venice district of Los Angeles.

Recently, she said, a woman selling Buddhas and incense kicked her table across the boardwalk claiming that Dietlin had set up her table in her space. "It never used to be like that," she said.

The city has responded with new rules to give more people a chance at a space on the strip, but the peak summer season looms more chaotic than ever.

For the first time, the city has been giving out all the vendor spaces in its weekly lotteries. People from as far away as New York and Florida are participating, said Victor Jauregui, senior director of the Venice Beach Recreation Center, which runs the lottery.

The number of performers wanting a spot has jumped by 80 percent over the past year, while the number of vendors has doubled. That's led to some boisterous raffles.

"They get into it, calling each other all kinds of names," Jauregui said. "It's the frustration, especially if you get someone who is truly an artist and they haven't gotten a space in a few weeks."

Police say the tension is spilling on to the boardwalk with complaints about illegal selling and even fistfights over spaces.

"It's been a busy winter. People are trying to make ends meet and they don't know the rules," said Los Angeles police Sgt. Marc Reina. "We try to mediate and keep the peace, but it's crowded and they want to sell. It's a challenge."

Many felony pot cases getting tossed out of court

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Police in a northern California town thought they had an open-and-shut case when they seized more than two pounds of marijuana from a couple's home, even though doctors authorized the pair to use pot for medical purposes.

San Francisco police thought the same with a father and son team they suspected of abusing the state's medical marijuana law by allegedly operating an illegal trafficking operation.

But both cases were tossed out along with many other marijuana possession cases in recent weeks because of a California Supreme Court ruling that has police, prosecutors and defense attorneys scrambling to make sense of a gray legal area: What is the maximum amount of cannabis a medical marijuana patient can possess?

No one can say for sure how many dismissals and acquittals have been prompted by the ruling, but the numbers are stacking up since the Supreme Court on Jan. 21 tossed out Patrick Kelly's marijuana possession conviction.

The high court struck down a 7-year-old state law that imposed an 8-ounce limit on the amount of pot medical users of marijuana could possess. The court said patients are entitled to a "reasonable" amount of the drug to treat their ailments.

Law enforcement officials say the ruling has made the murky legal landscape of marijuana policy in California even more challenging to enforce.

Since California voters legalized medical marijuana in 1996, there has been tension between local law enforcement officials and federal authorities, who view marijuana as absolutely illegal.

That tension is expected to become even more pronounced if the state's voters approve a November ballot measure legalizing possession of small amounts of marijuana.

"The way the law is now it puts law enforcement between a rock and a hard place," said Martin J. Mayer, a lawyer who represents California State Sheriff's Association, California Police Chief's Association and California Peace Officers' Association. "The measure, if it passes, will make it even more difficult. They just don't like being in the middle."

ACROSS THE NATION

NYC suspends operator's license after crane strike

NEW YORK (AP)—The operator of a crane that tilted and hit a 25-story building near Wall Street, sending debris plummeting to the ground and causing several evacuations, had his license suspended Sunday because he didn't secure the crane properly, a Department of Buildings spokesman said. Christopher Cosban "failed to leave the equipment in the safest position possible" at the end of the workday Saturday, buildings spokesman Tony Sclafani said. While a final determination on the cause of the accident still has to be determined, Sclafani said it appeared the improper position of the crane contributed.

Plane runs out of fuel, crashes on NY road; 2 hurt

PALERMO, N.Y. (AP)—A small plane that ran out of fuel and issued a distress call crashed on a roadway while trying to land Sunday afternoon, seriously injuring the two women aboard, authorities said. Firefighters pulled the women from the downed aircraft after the crash was reported to police in Oswego County, on the southeastern shore of Lake Ontario, around 3:30 p.m. The women were taken to a hospital in nearby Syracuse, one by ambulance, the other by helicopter. A nursing supervisor at the hospital said she was unable to give any information on the women until their identities were released.

Alleged fugitive claims to be man who died in 1983

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP)—An accused fugitive who police say escaped while serving a 20-year prison sentence for drug trafficking claims he's a man who died in Virginia nearly three decades ago. The man who North Carolina authorities say is Charles Sparks, 69, drove off from a Florida prison in a car he had been cleaning as part of an inmate work crew, the StarNews of Wilmington reported Sunday. However, the man told the newspaper during a jailhouse interview that he is William Bolyn Garrett of Danville, Va. Police and Garrett's family say the man died in 1983 at age 43.

Violent storms do damage north of Charlotte

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Officials say a handful of people were injured by violent storms that likely spawned tornadoes, ripped the metal roof off at least one building and damaged dozens of homes in central North Carolina. National Weather Service meteorologist Gail Hartfield says eyewitnesses spotted several tornadoes between Charlotte and Greensboro on Sunday night, though none has been confirmed. She says there are initial reports of several injuries in the Linwood area. She said 20 to 30 homes have been damaged in High Point. Hundreds of lightning strikes have been reported, as well as high winds, hail and heavy rain between Charlotte and Greensboro. Northern Georgia also was hit with heavy storms.

Asia

Obama slips into Afghanistan to voice US resolve

KABUL (AP)—Under elaborate secrecy, President Barack Obama slipped into Afghanistan on Sunday near the front lines of the increasingly bloody 8-year-old war he is expanding and affirmed America's commitment to destroying al-Qaida and its extremist allies in the land where the 9-11 plot was hatched.

Obama's six-hour visit was conducted entirely under the shroud of nightfall, after Air Force One's unannounced flight from the U.S. Obama defended his decision to escalate the fight, telling troops whose numbers he is tripling that their victory is imperative to America's safety.

His bid to shore up faith in the struggle was aimed both at the troops who cheered him and Americans back home. And, he demanded accountability from Afghan authorities to make good on repeated promises to improve living conditions, rein in corruption and enforce the rule of law to prevent people from joining the insurgency.

"Your services are absolutely necessary, absolutely essential to America's safety and security," the president told a lively crowd of about 2,500 troops and civilians at Bagram Air Field north of Kabul. "Those folks back home are relying on you. We can't forget why we're here."

It was Obama's first trip as president to Afghanistan, where the number of U.S. troops killed has roughly doubled in the first three months of 2010 compared with the same period last year as Washington has added tens of thousands of additional soldiers to reverse the Taliban's momentum.

NKorea accuses South of psychological warfare

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea warned the U.S. and South Korea on Monday of deadly consequences for engaging in "psychological warfare" by allowing journalists into the heavily fortified Demilitarized Zone dividing the two Koreas.

The stern statement was the first from North Korea's military since a South Korean naval ship sank in the tense waters near the Koreas' maritime border under unclear circumstances. It made no mention of the ship, submerged off the South Korean island of Baengnyeong as the mission to rescue 46 missing seamen continued.

The area, just south of the disputed sea border, has been the site of three bloody skirmishes between the foes. However, South Korean and U.S. officials say nothing suggests North Korean involvement in Saturday's sinking.

The exact cause of the explosion that tore a hole into the Cheonan and split it apart may not be clear until the ship is salvaged after the rescue operation, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said.

On Monday, a spokesman for the Korean People's Army accused South Korea of engaging in "psychological warfare" inside the DMZ, saying that allowing journalists into the zone violates the armistice agreement signed to stop the three-year Korean War in 1953.

Opposition deciding whether to run in Myanmar poll

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—The party of detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi was meeting Monday to decide whether to participate in the first election in military-ruled Myanmar in two decades, the party spokesman said.

A senior party member called it "a life-or-death" decision.

More than 100 senior members of the National League for Democracy gathered at its Yangon headquarters for the decision expected Monday or shortly thereafter, spokesman Nyan Win said.

Interviews with a number of the 115 delegates indicated that the party would chose not to register and thus be forced to dissolve.

"This meeting is a life-or-death issue. If we don't register, we will not have a party and we will be without legs and limbs," said Win Tin, a veteran party member and one of Myanmar's longest serving political prisoners.

Security was heightened, with plainclothes police and pro-government security guards stationed around the party's compound.

Under new election laws, political parties have until the first week of May to register for the balloting, the date of which has yet to be announced. One of the new laws requires parties to register for the election or cease to exist.

Last week, Suu Kyi was quoted by her lawyer as saying she opposed registering her party because the ruling junta's restrictions on the vote were "unjust." But she stressed she will let the party decide for itself.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Flood traps 153 coal miners in northern China

TAYUAN, China (AP)—Rescuers were scrambling Monday to save 153 workers trapped after a flood swept through a coal mine in northern China, the country's work safety agency said. Authorities had said Sunday night that 123 workers were missing after the Wangjialing Coal Mine in Shanxi province flooded Sunday afternoon. It wasn't immediately clear why the number jumped to 153 overnight. The State Administration of Work Safety said in a statement on its Web site early Monday that 261 workers were in the mine when it flooded and 108 were lifted to safety. Provincial work safety official were at the site and directing rescue efforts, it said.

Thai PM, protesters meet again after live TV talks

BANGKOK (AP)—Thailand's prime minister and his political opponents were set for more talks Monday after their televised initial meeting defused tensions temporarily but did not bridge a divide over the protesters' insistence he call new elections. The "Red Shirt" protest leaders, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajva, and two of his advisers shook hands with strained smiles across a conference table Sunday before reiterating their sharply different stances. The three-hour meeting offered little reason to believe any agreement could be reached when the negotiations resume at 6 p.m. (1100 GMT). "Our request is simple and direct. We would like Parliament dissolved to return power to the people, so they can make their decision," said Veera Muksikapong, one of the protest leaders.

Philippine troops capture key Abu Sayyaf camp

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine troops, backed by artillery and helicopter fire, have captured a key jungle camp of the Abu Sayyaf extremist group and may have killed several militants during a two-day assault, military officials said Sunday. Marines and army troops captured the jungle encampment in Jolo island's mountainous Patikul township Friday with the help of U.S. military intelligence, regional military chief Lt. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino said. About 50 Abu Sayyaf fighters led by ailing commander Radulan Sahiron fled and were pursued by troops, he said. Two marines were wounded and several Abu Sayyaf fighters were believed killed as troops pursued the militants in an offensive that ended Sunday. At least one body of an Abu Sayyaf fighter killed in the assault was dug up by troops, he said.

World

Officials: Suicide bombs kill 35 on Moscow subway

MOSCOW (AP)—Two female suicide bombers blew themselves up on Moscow's subway system as it was jampacked with rush-hour passengers Monday, killing at least 35 people and wounding more than 30, the city's mayor and other officials said.

Emergency Ministry spokeswoman Svetlana Chumikova said 23 people were killed at the Lubyanka station in central Moscow. The station is underneath the building that houses the main offices of the Federal Security Service, or FSB, the KGB's main successor agency.

A second explosion hit the Park Kultury station about 45 minutes later. Chumikova said at least 12 were dead there.

Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov said both explosions were believed to have been set off by female suicide bombers as the trains entered the stations. In the first case, officials said the explosion was on the train; there was no immediate information on the location of the second blast.

"The first data that the FSB has given us is that there were two female suicide bombers," Luzhkov told reporters at the Park Kultury site.

Russia's top investigative body also said terrorism was suspected.

The last confirmed terrorist attack in Moscow was in August 2004, when a suicide bomber blew herself up outside a city subway station, killing 10 people.

Responsibility for that blast was claimed by Chechen rebels and suspicion in Monday's explosions is likely to focus on them and other separatist groups in the restive North Caucasus region.

The Moscow subway system is one of the world's busiest, carrying around 7 million passengers on an average workday, and is a key element in running the sprawling and traffic-choked city.

AP

Police officers evacuate people from Park Kultury sabway station in downtown Moscow on Monday, March 29, 2010.

Miracle under scrutiny in John Paul beatification

VATICAN CITY (AP)—The Vatican this week marks the fifth anniversary of Pope John Paul II's death amid some doubts that the miracle needed for his saint-making cause will stand up to scrutiny and questions about his record combatting pedophile priests.

The inexplicable cure of a young French nun from Parkinson's disease had initially seemed like the perfect case for a miracle as the Vatican fast-tracked John Paul's beatification. The nun, who suffered from the same disease that ravaged John Paul for years, had prayed to him for relief and one morning two months after John Paul died, woke up completely, inexplicably cured.

But from the beginning, Simon-Pierre's mysterious cure seemed difficult for the Vatican to certify as a miracle. According to the Vatican's own rules, the medically inexplicable cure must be instantaneous, complete, and lasting.

While the nun's cure was by all indications instantaneous and complete, some would argue the world will have to wait her entire lifetime to determine whether it was lasting, in case the symptoms return.

New questions were raised in recent weeks, after a Polish newspaper reported that doubts had been cast about whether Simon-Pierre had Parkinson's to begin with. The Rzeczpospolita daily, one of Poland's most respected and widely read newspapers, suggested that Simon-Pierre instead may have suffered from another neurological disease which has smilier symptoms as Parkinson's but which can be cured.

WORLD BRIEFS

Netanyahu tries to play down tensions with US

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel's leader tried to play down tensions with the U.S. on Sunday after a rocky meeting at the White House last week, saying that relations with Washington remain solid. In his first public comments on the matter, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his Cabinet that Israel and the U.S. can work out their differences. "The relationship between Israel and the U.S. is one between allies and friends, and it's a relationship based on years of tradition," Netanyahu said. "Even if there are disagreements, these are disagreements between friends, and that's how they will stay." The U.S. has criticized Israeli construction in east Jerusalem—the section of the holy city claimed by the Palestinians. It has asked Israel for gestures toward the Palestinians to help relaunch peace talks, which were about to start earlier this month when the latest spat over settlements broke out.

Arab leaders renew support for peace efforts

SIRTE, Libya (AP)—Arab leaders on Sunday renewed their support for Mideast peace efforts, rejecting pressure from Syria and Libya on the Palestinians to abandon talks with Israel and resume armed resistance. The Arab League's backing for the land for peace initiative with Israel comes despite its firm opposition to Israeli plans for new Jewish settlements in east Jerusalem, land Palestinians claim as the capital of a future state. "The Arab peace initiative is a serious move. If we withdraw it, what will be the Arab stance after that," Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa told reporters after the summit's closing session.

Bombs kill 5 at house tied to Iraq Sunni candidate

BAGHDAD (AP)—Several bombs exploded Sunday near a house linked to a prominent Sunni figure who ran in this month's parliamentary elections in Iraq, killing five people and wounding 26 others, a police official said. The attack adds to fears of postelection violence as the bitter election rivals enter what are expected to be drawn out talks on forming the next government that will rule Iraq as U.S. troops leave by the end of 2011. Sunday's blasts took place in the town of Qaim, about 200 miles (320 kilometers) west of Baghdad and on the border with Syria, the police official said.

Focus

Patrolling the underworld, USGS scientists await the Big One

By BRUCE NEWMAN
SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

SAN JOSE, Calif.—The alarming numbers had been rippling across the Pacific to the Menlo Park, Calif., offices of the U.S. Geological Survey all week, each one sending a kind of electric jolt through seismologist David Oppenheimer as his phone buzzed frantically with the latest news.

"When my cell phone lights up, and I see there's a magnitude 8 earthquake in Samoa, my first reaction is, 'Wow, people just died,' " Oppenheimer said. "I can tell from the depth, I can tell from the magnitude, and I don't have to see any more. It's kind of sobering."

A week before the 20th anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake, all was quiet along the fault lines that fillet the Bay Area. Houses stood erect on their foundations, traffic moved fitfully along retrofitted freeways, and life proceeded as if the violent spasm that shook the region Oct. 17, 1989, had never happened.

But not in Oppenheimer's subterranean world, where he can never stop watching his monitors, waiting for something horrible to happen here.

It was a busy week below the Earth's surface, and across the Pacific, a decidedly deadly one above it. For most people here, the memory of Loma Prieta was even more remote than the carnage in Indonesia, where a magnitude 7.6 quake leveled villages and left more than 1,100 dead. In American Samoa, 22 were killed by a tsunami triggered by a quake. And four days after that, a magnitude 6.6 quake struck the Philippines.

Meanwhile, Oppenheimer had just finished monitoring a swarm of more than 435 small quakes rattling the Owens Valley in Central California when his cell phone once again buzzed insistently.

JOSIE LEPE/SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS/MCT

David Oppenheimer, chief, Northern CA Seismic Network Earthquake Hazards Team Geologic Division, stands in the visitors' room with graphs and helicorders used to record seismic data that receives digital feed from computers at the U.S. Geological Survey Menlo Park Campus in Menlo Park, California.

As he read a text message on the screen in the palm of his hand, the seismologist made a low, nervous sound and said, "This is not good."

A magnitude 7.6 quake had struck nearly 6,000 miles away, off the Pacific island of Vanuatu, setting off tsunami warnings. This time the tsunami failed to materialize, and nobody died, but at the USGS it set off a tidal wave of questions. Did this string of massive quakes marching eastward across the Pacific mean that the Big One was heading toward California?

Oppenheimer runs the Northern California Seismic Network—an array of nearly 500 ground sensors, most of them deployed after the Loma Prieta earthquake shook the Bay Area out of its geologic torpor 20 years ago. If the region's spider web of major fault lines is forming a bull's-eye beneath our feet, he is among the scientists at the USGS most likely to know.

"You can't help but think that the waves go out, and it shakes the whole planet," Oppenheimer said. He wondered whether the Pacific quakes would be "the straw that breaks the camel's back? When Vanuatu got shaken by these other two or three earthquakes, what happened? That's a difficult question. And the answer is, I don't think so. But I don't know."

Fortunately, there's a lot more that earthquake scientists do know now. Though it was not widely understood at the time, the biggest and most important office in the USGS system was thrown into chaos during the hours immediately after the Loma Prieta quake. The power went out, then the backup system failed, and a generator managed to keep only a few computers running.

"It barely worked in 1989," recalls Oppenheimer, who came to Menlo Park in 1977. "The networking crashed, so it took two hours of frantically running extension cords around the building to get it working again. It was not a proud moment."

In those days, the USGS had a room filled with drum-shaped seismographs that translated ground movement into a homely scrawl on paper. This became such a staple of television's earthquake coverage that the Visitor Center still has one of the old machines, reverse engineered to convert a digital data stream to analog. "There's such an expectation that that's what we do," Oppenheimer said, "so we take a $50,000 instrument and dumb it down to something that looks like it was operating 30 years ago." Which it was.

Besides those drums, the only significant piece of monitoring equipment the USGS had in 1989 was a TV set, which led seismologists to incorrectly conclude the Loma Prieta quake's epicenter was near San Francisco, rather than Santa Cruz. It was nearly two hours before the computers rebooted and the scientists learned that their eyes had deceived them.

To avoid a repeat of the fiasco that followed Loma Prieta, the USGS now has banks of computers that process data from remote sensors and immediately put it on the Internet—a network that didn't exist in 1989. "We've made huge improvements in the rapid availability and processing of data," said Paul Spudich, a geophysicist at the Menlo Park office since 1979.

The USGS is the largest civilian mapmaker in the world, and in the warren of bungalows where the Earth's crust is gently poked and prodded for clues to the next big shaker, the walls provide a constant reminder that it's a big world out there. And when discomforting data arrives from places like Sumatra and China, turning USGS scientists into "CSI: Magma" cops, people often get hurt.

"You really regret the price that people pay in earthquakes," says Spudich. "I think we'd all be very happy if they just stopped, or more realistically, if we managed to improve the infrastructure so that nobody got hurt. So that it was just an enjoyable thrill ride for everybody, as opposed to a life-threatening experience."

USGS geologist David Schwartz, who was also with the USGS when Loma Prieta struck, concedes he still can't suppress an "adrenaline rush" when a big quake happens. "I would not want to see a large earthquake on the Hayward fault," said Schwartz, whose home sits close to the fissure line. "But if it happened, I would be tremendously excited just seeing how right or wrong we may have been in our estimates of how buildings behave. If we turn out to be right, it gives us confidence to apply what we're doing here to other places. If it turns out we were wrong, well, then it's back to the drawing board."

Oppenheimer sees it much more starkly. He knows that if he doesn't prepare his data collection network for the next big earthquake, he will never get another chance.

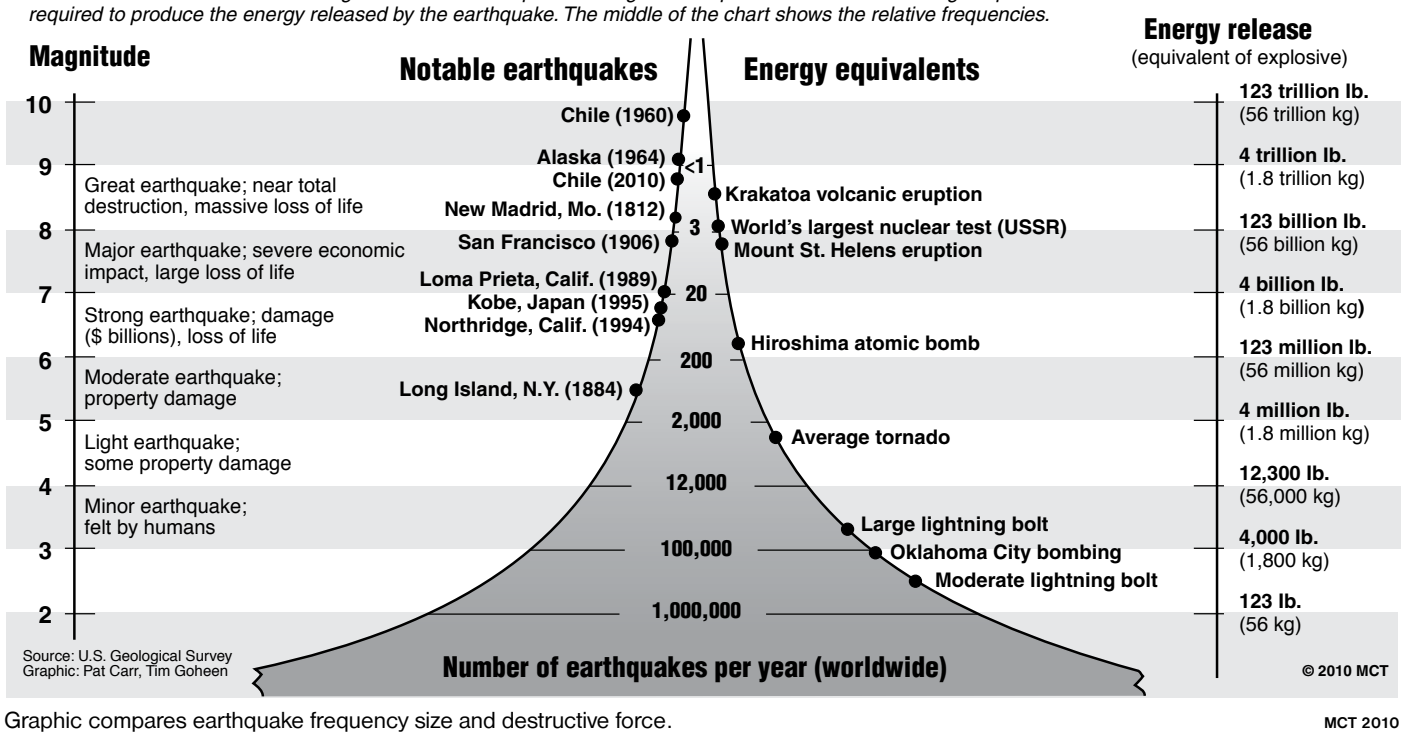
"It's not going to stop any of those buildings from falling down," he says, "but the next generation will benefit from those recordings. If I miss that opportunity, if those computers fall on their face, if we do something wrong and we don't acquire that data, it means waiting 150 years. That's a huge penalty for future generations. I worry about that."

JIM GENSHEIMER/SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS/MCT

The force of the October 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake opened these large fissures in the ground in front of this home on Summit Road in the Santa Cruz mountains in Santa Cruz, California.

Earthquake frequency and destructive power

Left side of the chart shows the magnitude of the earthquake and right side represents the amount of high explosive required to produce the energy released by the earthquake. The middle of the chart shows the relative frequencies.



Graphic compares earthquake frequency size and destructive force.

MCT 2010

Overdrive

AAA names top picks for commuter vehicles

By JERRY HIRSCH
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The type of vehicle you drive can ease both the expense and pain of a long commute, according to the American Automobile Association.

Mindful of how wearing commuting can be on drivers, the auto club evaluated hundreds of vehicle models and compiled a list of autos that make good cars for commuters. It evaluated vehicles on practicality, safety, comfort, fuel efficiency and affordability.

Nationally, the average motorist spends about 41 minutes a day traveling about 22.5 miles round trip to and from work.

Here are the auto club's picks for vehicles that work well on long commutes.

Honda Insight		Among the best in fuel economy while being reasonably comfortable for the driver and front-seat passenger. AAA says it's also less costly and more fun to drive than some of its hybrid competitors.
Ford Fusion		Four-cylinder versions have a good combination of power, comfort and handling competence, the AAA says. The hybrid offers great fuel economy but comes with a higher purchase price.
Volkswagen Jetta TDI		A fine-running modern diesel that "is every bit as economical as the most miserly hybrids" and "fun to drive," the AAA says.
Hyundai Elantra		Good fuel efficiency combined with an interior that accommodates a driver and three passengers. AAA notes that the 10-year/100,000-mile warranty is a plus for high-mile commuting.
Subaru Legacy/ Outback		These new models with four-cylinder engines perform well and offer enhanced rear seat legroom.
Honda Civic		Affordable, dependable, economical and comfortable, the Civic is one of the better performing compacts for a wide range of uses, including commuting, AAA says. The sporty 197 horsepower Si sedan also deserves consideration.
Chevrolet Malibu		Nicely styled competent performer. The four-cylinder models offers enough power for the daily commute and promise decent fuel economy. The passenger cabin is nicely finished and roomy, both in the front and rear, making it a good choice for carpooling.
Honda Accord		Good for the commute and good for family transportation, the Accord is roomy, solid and economical when equipped with the four-cylinder engine.
Mazda3		Crisp handling and above average power for the compact field. Fuel economy also is good. The ride can be a little flinty, so commuters facing long stretches of neglected urban highways may want to look elsewhere.
If you want a bit more in luxury and styling, the auto club suggested: BMW 3-Series		The first sports sedan remains the best by many measures. AAA said its engine choices "are impressive for their power and refinement, the handling is top notch and the build quality is excellent."
Mini Cooper		A premium subcompact, the Mini is both sporty and economical with fuel. Few cars are as much fun to drive and few small cars offer as many safety features.
Chevrolet Corvette		Here's one way to spice up the commute. The surprise is when Corvette is "driven appropriately, it can even return near-compact car fuel economy of around 26 mpg on the highway," AAA said.
Buick Enclave		Handling the commute for as many as eight people, the Enclave combines what the auto club called an exceptionally quiet ride with competent handling and surprising room in all three rows.
Mercedes-Benz GL		Roomy seating for seven, unexcelled refinement, all-wheel drive and the option of a surprisingly economical (for the vehicle size) diesel engine make this a highly desirable commuter for multi-adult carpools.
Volkswagen GTI		Sporty, fun to drive and able to return mid- to upper-20 mpg fuel economy results with the 200-horsepower turbocharged engine. Two adults can fit in the rear seat.

UNDER THE HOOD

Angry ex-girlfriend probably didn't sabotage Civic

BY BRAD BERGHOLDT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

QUESTION: As a single mother of two teenage sons, I get a great deal of benefit from your columns. Thanks for all the practical advice.

I have a 1998 Honda Civic with around 250,000 miles on it that still performs amazingly well. However, it recently started dying as it was being driven. It won't restart immediately but will restart after sitting for about 10 minutes. We replaced the distributor but that didn't help. After replacing the fuel pump and fuel filter, it drove fine for about 3 weeks but has started dying again. The problem does not seem to be related to acceleration or deceleration since it dies as you are simply driving along at any speed.

I have wondered about the effects of outside temperature and also if my son's angry ex-girlfriend might have put something in the fuel tank. How could that be detected and resolved? Thanks for any help you could give.—Bette W.

ANSWER: Now this is something you don't see very often—a Honda that stops running! Just prior to the fuel pump being replaced, and after the three week OK period, how often did the problem surface? If fuel pump replacement led to a night and day difference, retracing steps in this area makes sense. I'm thinking a possible loose electrical connection, or as you suggested, fuel contamination. It's highly unlikely a new fuel pump would act up so similarly to the original one, and if the Civic runs strong between these episodes, fuel contamination also isn't likely.

At the time of an incident, wiggling wire connections near the fuel pump may result in an immediate startup (the offending connection is then tightened, replaced, or bypassed) Here's how to check for this, as well as look for contamination:

Once the back seat pad is removed, a salad-plate sized disc in the floor can be removed, providing access to the top of the fuel tank. The fuel pump assembly (a saucer-sized disc seals it) is now visible. Removing the fuel pump assembly provides a great view inside the tank, and contamination residue would be easy to spot.

A strong caution: Accessing the tank internal parts releases highly flammable fuel vapors. Take great care to provide adequate ventilation by opening all doors, and avoid any source of sparks. This isn't a job for your teenagers.

If fuel pump replacement didn't make a verifiable difference in the Civic's behavior, let's try some other things. Prior to the next incident, learn the location of the PGM-FI relay. This 2-inch rectangular plastic gadget, mounted above, behind or to the right of the glove box, controls the fuel pump by switching electrical current to it (open the glove box and depress the tabs to let it drop completely open). Giving the relay a sharp smack, during the next incident, may also result in an immediate engine restart—or perhaps put it out of its misery for good. Either way, this would tell you the relay is the part to renew. You might also try removing and reinstalling the fuel cap at the time of an incident (venting the tank)—the cap's internal vent valve may be balky.

Checking for ignition spark, at the time of an incident, may also be needed. This is simple to do with a basic spark tester. Verifying fuel injector clicking is also easy—touching one with fingertips while a helper cranks the engine. An absence of spark or clicks is a strong clue that will help a technician zero in on the problem. Rest assured this fault, as long as it acts up regularly, will not be difficult to get to the bottom of, and the Civic should be good for another 250,000 miles.

Life & Style

Japanese architects Sejima and Nishizawa win Pritzker

AP

This image provided by SANAA shows the New museum of Contemporary Art in New York, New York, designed by 2010 Pritzker Architecture Prize recipients, Ryue Nishizawa and Kazuyo Sejima.

AP

This image provided by Sanaa Ltd. shows the 2010 Pritzker Architecture Prize recipients, Ryue Nishizawa, left, and Kazuyo Sejima.

By JACOB ADELMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, a duo of Japanese architects praised for using everyday building materials to create ethereal structures that shelter flowing, dreamlike spaces, have won the 2010 Pritzker Architecture Prize, the prize's jury announced Sunday.

Sejima, 54, and Nishizawa, 44, join Frank Gehry, Rem Koolhaas and Renzo Piano in receiving the top honor in the field in recognition of the art museums, university buildings and designer-label fashion boutiques they have designed in Japan, the United States and Europe.

"We want to make architecture that people like to use," said Sejima, who likened the pair's structures to public plazas, where visitors can roam freely in groups or find comfortable spots to spend time on their own. "The jury somehow appreciated our way of making architecture."

The Pritzker jury of architects, academics, writers and designers praised Sejima and Nishizawa for designing structures that blend into their surroundings to provide unassuming backdrops for the activities occurring in their midst.

"They explore like few others the phenomenal properties of continuous space, lightness, transparency and materiality," the jurors wrote. "They seek the essential qualities of architecture that result in a much-appreciated straightforwardness, economy of means and restraint."

Among the projects mentioned by the Pritzker jury were the translucent-skinned Christian Dior Building in Tokyo's upscale Omotesando shopping district and the Toledo Museum of Art's see-through Glass Pavilion.

The jury also mentioned the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology's newly opened Rolex Learning Center, a single-story slab-like concrete and glass structure that undulates over a four acre site, punctured in places to let light enter the massive open space that makes up its interior.

"It's got an excitement and a vitality to it, as well as an originality that you don't often see," said Pritzker juror Lord Peter Palumbo. "It's the sort of building that stops you dead in your tracks."

Sejima, who had previously worked in the offices of acclaimed Japanese architect Toyo Ito, and Nishizawa formed their Tokyo-based design firm Sanaa Ltd. in 1995. The duo was awarded the 2005 Rolf Schock visual arts prize by Sweden's royal academies in 2005.

Sejima is currently serving as the director of this year's Venice Architecture Biennale, the first woman to do so.

The formal Pritzker ceremony will be held in May on Ellis Island. Sejima and Nishizawa will receive a $100,000 grant and a pair of bronze medallions.

Sejima and Nishizawa are the fourth Pritzker laureates to be chosen from Japan after Kenzo Tange, Fumihiko Maki and Tadao Ando.

The duo said they don't see themselves as working within any sort of distinct Japanese architectural tradition. But they acknowledged being influenced by the austere construction methods, lightweight materials and porous boundaries between inside and outside space that characterize traditional Japanese buildings.

"If you see Japanese temples made of wood, you can see how the architecture is made up," Nishizawa said. "They have a clear construction and transparency and they are quite simple. I think this is one of the big things that we are influenced by."

In their citation, the Pritzker jury also named the pair's New Museum of Contemporary Art, a mid-rise stack of unevenly sized, white metal blocks that sit atop a transparent glass base on a scruffy street in New York's lower east side.

The museum moved in December 2007 from its previous location in an up-market SoHo shopping area to the new site in a shabbier part of town.

Nishizawa highlighted that project as embodying the duo's ambition of creating buildings that are open for all to enjoy.

"We're always thinking, 'How we can open up the architecture to the people or to the surroundings that each project has?' This is one of the reasons why our architecture becomes open and transparent and light," Nishizawa said.

"This is just to allow people to come in and to allow people to stay within the building as they like," he said. "The architecture is like a park."

FIRST YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY

CRISTIN CABRERA DUENAS
"TING"

We, the family, humbly invite all our relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the passing of our dearly beloved unto eternal life.

Nightly Rosary is being said at 7:00 p.m on March 23, 2010 at San Jose Church, Oleai and daily Mass is being offered every morning at 6:00 a.m. at San Jose Church. On the last day March 31, 2010 Mass will be offered at 6:00 a.m. Breakfast will be served immediately after.

Thank You, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghillisow

Kinai, Children & Family

FIRST YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY

In Loving Memory of

JOHN EDWARD UNTALAN

KNOWN AS "JOHNNY U"

We are inviting all our relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the First Year Death Anniversary of our Dearly Beloved Son, Cherished Brother, Devoted Husband and Loving Daddy.

Daily Mass of Intention will be Celebrated at

	San Jose Church (Tinian)	San Vicente Church (Saipan)
March 23 - Tuesday	6:00 AM	6:00 PM
March 24 - Wednesday	6:00 PM	6:00 PM
March 25 - Thursday	6:00 AM	6:00 PM
March 26 - Friday	6:00 PM	6:00 PM
March 27 - Saturday	6:00 AM & 6:00 PM	6:00PM
March 28 - Sunday	6:00 AM & 8:00 AM	6:00 PM
March 29 - Monday	6:00 PM	6:00 PM
March 30 - Tuesday	6:00 AM	6:00 PM

On the Final Day, March 31st, Wednesday, The Eucharistic Celebration will be at San Jose Church (Tinian) at 6:00 AM and Mt. Carmel Cathedral (Saipan) at 7:00 PM. Dinner will follow immediately at Gladyz M. Untalan's Residence in DanDan, Saipan.

Your presence, thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Thank You, Maraming Salamat Po and Un Dangkulo na Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

From: Gladyz M. Untalan (Wife) & Children

Miley's 'Last Song': Cyrus setting music aside

By DAVID GERMAIN
AP MOVIE WRITER

SANTA MONICA, California (AP)—Singing was the last thing on Miley Cyrus' mind in "The Last Song."

Other than a brief sing-along to a tune on a car radio, her character doesn't do any crooning, something Cyrus deliberately avoided with her first lead in a live-action film that doesn't feature musical alter-ego Hannah Montana.

"I didn't want to sing in the film. We sang in the car that once, but that doesn't really count. I didn't want to do a performance thing," said Cyrus, who also contributes two songs to the soundtrack but figures she wants to keep singing and acting separate from now on.

"I never say I'm not going to do anything. Then if I end up doing it, I'm going to get a lot of crap. 'She said she'd never ...', you know? And I don't have time for that drama and people freaking out. But most likely, I'd like to stay away from music in films and do a little something less obvious."

AP
In this March 13, 2010 photo, actress Miley Cyrus, from the upcoming film "The Last Song" poses for portrait in Santa Monica, Calif.

Music in general is going on hold for Cyrus, who said an upcoming album will be her last for at least a few years, because she wants to concentrate on big-screen roles.

Cyrus, 17, has a handful of episodes left to shoot in the final season of "Hannah Montana," the Disney Channel series that made her a star. She has remained in the Disney stable for a "Hannah Montana" concert movie and feature film and led the voice cast with John Travolta in the studio's animated hit "Bolt."

"The Last Song," also from Disney, is a calculated effort by teen idol Cyrus to graduate into more grown-up territory and bring her fans along without alienating them as she moves beyond Hannah's happy world.

Cyrus' mother, Tish Cyrus, was the executive producer on "The Last Song."

"She and Tish, her mom and also her manager, are very astute people and knew precisely what would be the right next movie for Miley," said Julie Anne Robinson, who directed "The Last Song." ''She's demonstrated that she has got emotional range and depth in this movie that can take her forward. I really think she could do almost anything."

Cyrus' character, Ronnie, is dealing with grim issues involving her divorced parents (Greg Kinnear and Kelly Preston) as she reluctantly spends a summer with her estranged dad, a composer and pianist who would love nothing more than to see his daughter resume her own abandoned piano studies.

Yet "The Last Song" also lets Ronnie put in some fun time at the beach with a hunky new beau (Liam Hemsworth, Cyrus' real-life boyfriend).

"It's a good steppingstone. Nothing too crazy. It's mature, but it's kind of for everyone," Cyrus said. "I think my next step, I'll get more and more mature and edgier, but I think it was the best steppingstone for me."

"The Last Song" was written specifically for Cyrus by novelist Nicholas Sparks, whose best-selling love stories include Hollywood adaptations such as "The Notebook," ''A Walk to Remember," ''Nights in Rodanthe" and this year's "Dear John."

Cyrus had expressed interest in taking on an inspirational story like "A Walk to Remember," and Sparks developed the plot and characters, then worked up the screenplay with his friend Jeff Van Wie. Once the script was done, Sparks sat down to write the novel version of "The Last Song," which came out last year.

Sparks tailored plot points to Cyrus, letting her choose her character's name (Ronnie was her grandfather's name) and developing sequences in which Ronnie tries to save a nest of endangered sea turtles after Cyrus mentioned she loved animals.

"The Last Song" turns melancholy, and Ronnie is forced to deal with betrayal and tragedy even as she reconnects with her father.

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How To Train Your Dragon
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:30
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:30
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:00
Gerald Butler, America Ferrera
Children, Family • Rated PG
Synopsis
The son of a Viking chief must capture a dragon in order to mark his passage into manhood and prove his worthiness to the tribe in directors Lorna Cook and David Soren's adaptation of Cressida Cowell's popular children's book. Gerard Butler, America Ferrera, Jonah Hill, Jay Baruchel, and Christopher Mintz-Plasse provide the voices for the DreamWorks Animation production.

Hot Tub Time Machine
Friday 4:05 7:10 9:55
Saturday 1:30 4:05 7:10 9:55
Sunday 1:30 4:05 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:10
John Cusack, Robert Corddry
Comedy • Rated R
Synopsis
A group of high school pals reunite at an old ski lodge party spot after years of being apart and find that the hot tub has magical time travel powers which teleport them to 1987. John Cusack, Rob Corddry, Craig Robinson, and Clark Duke star in the MGM comedy, with Steve Pink directing from a script by Josh Heald.

Repo Men
Friday 4:25 7:20 9:45
Saturday 1:25 4:25 7:20 9:45
Sunday 1:25 4:25 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:25 7:20
Jude Law, Forest Whitaker
Science Fiction • Rated R

Diary of Wimpy Kid
Friday 4:10 7:30 9:35
Saturday 1:20 4:10 7:30 9:35
Sunday 1:20 4:10 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:30
Zachary Gordon, Steven Zahn
Children's, Family • Rated PG

The Green Zone
Friday 4:30 7:25 9:50
Saturday 1:10 4:30 7:25 9:50
Sunday 1:10 4:30 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:25
Matt Damon, Greg Kinnear
Drama • Rated R

She's Out Of My League
Friday 4:20 9:40
Saturday 4:20 9:40
Sunday 4:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:20
Jay Baruchel, Alice Eve
Comedy • Rated R

Alice in Wonderland
Friday 4:15 7:15 10:00
Saturday 1:15 4:15 7:15 10:00
Sunday 1:15 4:15 7:15
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:15
Johnny Depp, Anne Hathaway
Fantasy • Rated PG

Dear John
Friday 7:05
Saturday 1:05 7:05
Sunday 1:05 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 7:05
Channing Tatum, Amanda Seyfried
Drama • Rated PG 13

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America Ferrera, from ugly to Viking bombshell

By SIGAL RATNER-ARIAS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—America Ferrera got her break as a curvy teenager in "Real Women Have Curves" and broke into stardom as the lovely "Ugly Betty."

A few months before the hit ABC television series gets to its finale, the actress says she found some of herself in the blond Viking bombshell she voices in "How to Train Your Dragon," the new DreamWorks Animation movie opening Friday.

Based on Cressida Cowell's children's book, the 3-D movie follows the adventures of Hiccup (voiced by Jay Baruchel), the scrawny, misfit son of Viking chief and master dragon-slayer Stoick the Vast (Gerard Butler).

With no heart for killing these creatures, Hiccup discovers his skills as a dragon whisperer and becomes a local hero among the villagers and a rival for fierce classmate Astrid (America Ferrera), also his love interest.

"She's a fantastic actress and she has a very beautiful and powerful voice, and Astrid, the character that she plays, I think is a great role model," DreamWorks' CEO Jeffrey Katzenberg said. "We wanted to have somebody who could really deliver the strength and the power of a great Viking warrior woman and she did it beautifully."

Aboard a cute Viking ship set up in the heart of Times Square on a chilly, cloudy morning, the 25-year-old Ferrera talked to The Associated Press about this new adventure and the end of the "Ugly" era.

Excerpts from the interview:

AP: It was refreshing to see you as someone so different from the actress we have seen before. How was it to play the bombshell in this movie?

FERRERA: It was really fun, you know. They had created the character Astrid before they cast me so I was just glad that they were very open minded to casting someone who didn't look like the character. ... It was nice to play something that wasn't really a version of me at all.

AP
Actress America Ferrera makes an appearance to promote the movie "How To Train Your Dragon," in New York's Times Square, Tuesday, March 23, 2010.

AP: This is not your first animated film. Can you tell us a bit about this particular experience?

FERRERA: It takes a while to get used to being in a studio and just having you and a microphone and no other actors to work off of. ... But once I did, it was freeing to just be able to play around.

AP: As different as you and Atrid are, do you find anything of her in you?

FERRERA: Definitely. In the way that Astrid wants to be the best of what she's doing regardless of whether she's a boy or not. You know, I was always the girl on the boys' baseball team, one of the only two girls in the Little League playing baseball, so I think there is a little bit of Astrid in me.

AP: What is the most powerful message for you in this movie.

FERRERA: It's about the Vikings and the dragons and how from the beginning of time all they've known is that they're each others enemies and they fight each other and no one really asks why. And the fact that Hiccup, the main character, dares to ask why turns the whole world upside down, and they realize that what they think is their enemy is actually their strongest partner.

AP: The end of "Ugly Betty" is nearing. How are you feeling about that?

FERRERA: It's a little sad to say goodbye and also, you know, (I'm) just always grateful that it was a part of my life, and I'm excited about the future and all the possibilities.

AP: Do you think it is ending too soon?

FERRERA: I don't think so. I mean, I think from the beginning I had a concern that we wouldn't get enough time to kind of complete her transformation. ... Could it keep on going? Maybe. But you know, I think we found a really good sort of peace with the character in her journey and now that it is the way it is it feels like it was always meant to be this way.

AP: Are you emotionally ready to leave Betty behind?

FERRERA: I don't know. I think that no matter when it happened I was going to be sad, because she's been a big part of my life, but yeah, I think that I'll be fine (laughs). I'm excited about the future and moving forward.

AP: Besides fame and recognition, what did Betty give you as an actress and as a person?

FERRERA: Being on the show and playing her gave me a place to really grow as an actor and show up every day and challenge myself again and know if I felt not great about the works that I did, I can always wake up the next day and come back and do it again.

'Dragon' stokes up box office with $43.3M debut

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"How to Train Your Dragon" breathed a bit of box-office fire with a $43.3 million opening weekend and a No. 1 debut, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Distributed by Paramount, the DreamWorks Animation adventure came in well behind the studio's last cartoon comedy, "Monsters vs. Aliens," which opened with $59.3 million over the same weekend last year.

With strong reviews and enthusiastic responses from viewers in exit polls, DreamWorks expects "How to Train Your Dragon" to have more staying power than "Monsters vs. Aliens" in subsequent weekends, though.

"People just love the film, so we're really anticipating we'll benefit from strong word of mouth going forward," said Anne Globe, head of marketing for DreamWorks.

"How to Train Your Dragon," featuring the voices of Jay Baruchel and America Ferrera in the tale of a Viking youth who tames a fire-breathing reptile, did outperform some other recent animated movies, among them "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs," which opened with $30.3 million last September.

Disney's "Alice in Wonderland," which had been No. 1 the previous three weekends, slipped to second place with $17.3 million. It raised its domestic total to $293.1 million and its worldwide haul to $656 million.

AP

In this film publicity image released by Paramount Pictures,Astrid, voiced by America Ferrera, center, is shown a scene is shown from "How to Train Your Dragon."

John Cusack's raunchy comedy "Hot Tub Time Machine" had a lukewarm No. 3 debut of $13.7 million. Released by MGM, the movie features Cusack as part of a group of losers hurled back by a time-traveling hot tub to the 1980s, where they have a chance to set their lives right.

"How to Train Your Dragon" pulled in 68 percent of its revenue from 3-D presentation, another triumph for the digital technology that allows theaters to show movies in three dimensions.

Yet it also highlights the limits on how much 3-D traffic theaters are equipped to handle. "How to Train Your Dragon" took over the bulk of 3-D theaters at the expense of Disney's "Alice in Wonderland," because the roughly 4,000 screens capable of showing digital 3-D movies is not enough to handle two full wide-release films at the same time.

"There's no question there are not enough screens yet," said Chuck Viane, head of distribution for Disney. "People who want to seek out 'Alice' in 3-D may have to travel a mile or two more than they used to. ... It's competition. I'm used to it."

After a phenomenal 15-week run, James Cameron's blockbuster "Avatar" lost most of its remaining 3-D theaters to "How to Train Your Dragon." The 20th Century Fox release finally fell out of the top 10, taking in $2 million to finish at No. 11, raising its domestic total to $740.4 million. Worldwide, the movie has taken in $2.7 billion.

Another new 3-D release, Warner Bros. action tale "Clash of the Titans," arrives Friday. While the success of 3-D movies has driven theater chains to speed up their conversion to systems that can project digital 3-D films, a screen shortage will remain for the near future.

"There is a limited amount of shelf space. It's like a traffic jam at the multiplex for these 3-D movies," said Paul Dergarabedian, box-office analyst for Hollywood.com. "It's a high-class problem to have, but it's still a problem."

Audition for movie extras draws thousands in Maui

KIHEI, Hawaii (AP)—Thousands of people turned out in Maui for a chance to appear in the Adam Sandler-Jennifer Aniston movie "Just Go With It."

Maui Film Commissioner Benita Brazier says more than 3,000 people showed up Saturday at the Kihei Charter School to apply to be extras in the film. Some people say they stood in line for nearly three hours before being called for their chance.

Movie officials have said they need "hundreds" of people to act as resort patrons, sitting around a pool, enjoying a luau and eating in restaurants.

Officials say most extras will be paid $100 for 10 hours of work, but those cast in special roles, such as hula dancers and "bikini girls," will get more.

The movie is scheduled to begin shooting next month for four to six weeks in Wailea.

Apple pushes back shipping of new iPad pre-orders

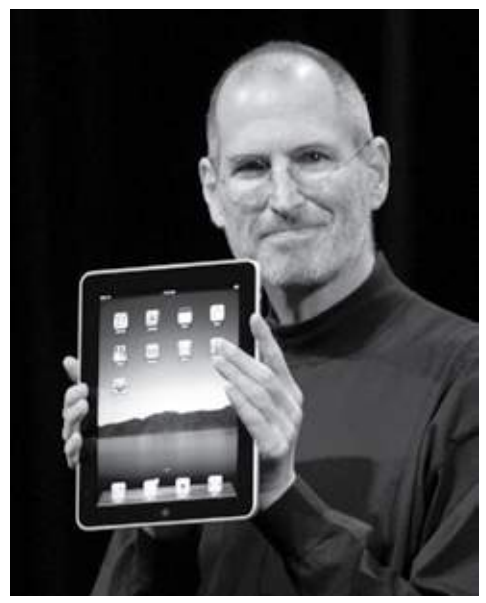
Apple Inc.'s iPad tablet computer hits U.S. shelves on Saturday, but fans who want the new touch-screen gadget shipped directly to them must wait a week.

The company began taking preorders for the iPad on March 12, promising to get the device to eager buyers by its store launch date of April 3rd. Customers who placed preorders by March 27 will receive the device by that date, where Saturday delivery is available, but Apple said Sunday that new pre-orders won't be shipped out until April 12.

The Cupertino, California, company declined to give a reason for the shipping delay, but said would-be customers can still pre-order the iPad for in-store pickup on April 3, or purchase the device in stores that day.

The iPads going on sale will connect to Wi-Fi networks only and cost $499, $599 or $699, depending on the data storage capacity.

Versions that also can connect to "3G" cellular networks are expected to go on sale in late April for $629, $729 or $829. International releases also are planned for later in April. ***(The Associated Press)***



AP

In this Jan. 27, 2010 photo shows Apple CEO Steve Jobs holding up the new iPad during a product announcement in San Francisco.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

'Miracle Worker' to close on B'way after short run

NEW YORK (AP)—The Broadway revival of "The Miracle Worker" will close April 4 after a disappointing run of less than two months and a loss of more than $2.5 million. The production stars Abigail Breslin as Helen Keller and Alison Pill as Annie Sullivan, the determined young woman who teaches the deaf and blind Helen how to communicate. Producer David Richenthal said Sunday that he was saddened by the play's short engagement but added that the opportunity "to share this powerful story with a new generation of theatergoers has been remarkable." The production will have played 21 previews and 38 regular performances at Circle in the Square Theatre. The play by William Gibson originally was on Broadway in 1959 with Patty Duke as Helen and Anne Bancroft as Annie.

Fashion photographer Peter Gowland dies at 93

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Peter Gowland, an innovative fashion photographer who invented elite cameras and equipment that he used to shoot pinups and magazine covers for six decades, has died at 93. Gowland's wife of 68 years, Alice, tells the Los Angeles Times in a Sunday story that Gowland died March 17 at his Los Angeles home of complications from hip surgery. Gowland shot more than 1,000 magazine covers, mostly glamour shots of female models but also portraits of celebrities like Rock Hudson and Robert Wagner. Magazines he took photos for included Rolling Stone and Playboy. Gowland also invented the twin-lens Gowlandflex camera, which used 4-by-5 inch film for high-quality pictures and has since been used by photographers like Annie Leibovitz.

Car names suggest that you are what you drive

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I had fun coming up with cars that fit with certain professions (Jan. 23). It made a long car ride seem short. Here's what we came up with: The Greek epic poet Homer would have a Honda Odyssey, and a firefighter a Chevy Blazer. An entomologist would crawl through traffic in his Mitsubishi Spyder. A meteorologist would drive a Honda Element, an astronomer would have a Mitsubishi Eclipse and an optician a Ford Focus. Picasso would paint the town in his Nissan Cube, an ornithologist would use a Ford Falcon and his lawyer would drive a Honda Civic.

MEGAN T., RIDING THE HIGHWAYS IN BELVIDERE, N.J.

DEAR MEGAN: I'm pleased I was able to make your road trip more enjoyable. Readers, you amaze me! You put the pedal to the metal and came up with some ingenious responses. My staff and I had a great time reading them. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Stretching my imagination, I envisioned Jacques Cousteau with his Plymouth Barracuda, King Arthur in an Excalibur Phaeton and "Mini-Me" in a Mini Cooper. "Dog the Bounty Hunter" would choose a Mercury Tracer. And don't you think Cadillac had Disney villainess "Cruella" in mind when it came out with the "DeVille"?

WINNI AT THE WHEEL IN L.A.

DEAR ABBY: I work at a correctional facility and had to laugh when I saw the warden drive up in his Ford Escape!

JAZZY IN WAYNESBORO, TENN.

DEAR ABBY: Here's my suggestion: Clint Eastwood driving a Dodge Magnum with a Magnum Force plate—no, wait, he can't have that one because I already do!

DONNA IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

DEAR ABBY: How about pairing these names and cars? Astronomer Carl Sagan in a Mercury Comet, decathlon winner Bruce Jenner in his Javelin, Mr. T. in his very own Model T. And finally, Albert Einstein sporting around in—what else—a Smart Car.

STEVEN, ALONG FOR THE RIDE IN L.A.

DEAR ABBY: I have one: Michael Phelps in his Ford Freestyle.

EMILIE IN ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

DEAR ABBY: I submit the following: Keanu Reeves driving a Toyota Matrix, Courteney Cox cruising around in her Mercury Cougar, Dizzy Gillespie in a Dodge Coronet and Thomas Edison in a Chevy Volt. When Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger isn't driving around in his Hummer, he'd be using his Ford Flex, and Ben Franklin would drive a Jeep Liberty. Abby, thanks for providing so many funny moments as well as insightful advice.

GREG IN GLADEWATER, TEXAS

DEAR ABBY: If some famous people were alive today, they'd have some interesting choices. Christopher Columbus might drive a Ford Explorer and Daniel Boone a Mercury Mountaineer.

TERI IN ORRVILLE, OHIO

DEAR ABBY: We're up to the challenge here in Oregon. A Navy captain driving his PT Cruiser, a housekeeper in her Plymouth Duster and, finally, the local weatherman in his Oldsmobile Toronado.

DEBBIE IN EUGENE

DEAR ABBY: I have the perfect model for the 12 disciples. The Bible says they were all in one Accord.

JANE RIVERA IN PENNSYLVANIA

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby – Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

LOOK AT YOU! HOW COULD ANYONE GET SO DIRTY AT SCHOOL?
I GOT THIS DIRTY JUST TRYING TO WALK IN THE FRONT DOOR! OL' CATAPULT BUTT WAS LYING IN WAIT FOR ME.
WELL, IT DOESN'T MATTER. YOU'D BETTER GET IN THE TUB NOW ANYWAY.
A BATH?!
BUT IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE AFTERNOON!
YES, BUT I HAVE TO GET IN THE SHOWER BEFORE YOUR DAD GETS HOME, SO HE CAN TAKE ONE.
WHY ALL THE BATHS? IS THERE SOME EPIDEMIC GOING AROUND?
I TOLD YOU THIS MORNING WE'RE GOING OUT TONIGHT. ROSALYN WILL BE HERE AT 6:00.
AUGH HHH!
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3-30

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

SOMETIMES IT SEEMS LIKE...
I'M JUST GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS...
BOOT!
CRASH
AND THEN ODIE LANDS ON JON'S TOOTHPICK EIFFEL TOWER AND IT ALL SEEMS WORTHWHILE AGAIN!
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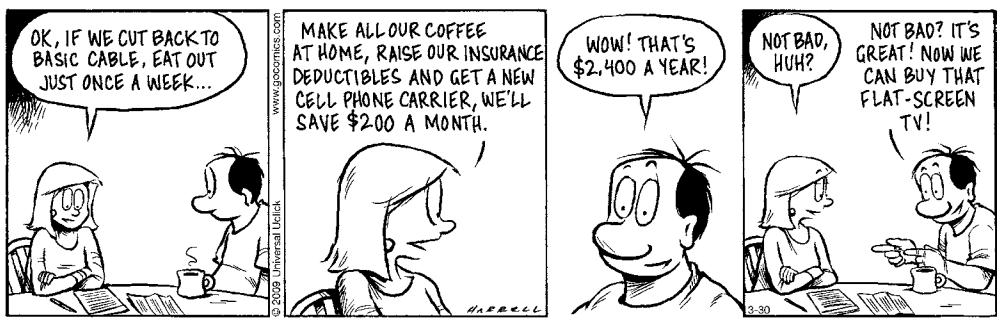
JIM DAVIS 3/30

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset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NOT BAD? IT'S GREAT! NOW WE CAN BUY THAT FLAT-SCREEN TV!
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The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I'M NOT THAT HUNGRY. I THINK I'LL JUST ORDER SOMETHING OFF THE KIDDIE MENU.
I'LL HAVE THE HAPPY-SNAPPY HOOT-N-HOLLER CHEESY BURGER. OH, AND A BEER.
A WHAT?
A BEERSIE-WEERSIE.
www.gocomics.com
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3-30-10

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

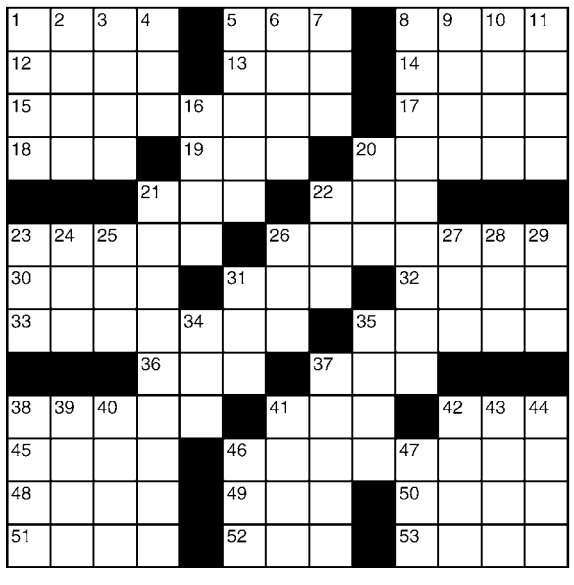
ACROSS
1 Disappear gradually
5 Fox competitor
8 Georgetown athlete
12 Sacred bird of Egypt
13 Carnival city
14 Squared
15 Screwdriver type
17 Car
18 Conger, e.g.
19 Donkey
20 Mgmt.
21 Historic boy king
22 Suitable
23 Calyx leaf
26 Rum exporter
30 Door handle
31 Levy
32 Lake vessel
33 Lemon-colored
35 Big feather
36 Environmentally friendly
37 Witness
38 Explosion
41 Fellow
42 Time of your life?
45 Latvia's capital
46 Bonneville feature
48 Exam format
49 "6 Rms — Vu"
50 Magnificent tale
51 Frog kisser's growth
52 Individual
53 This and that

DOWN
1 Flute's kin
2 Competent
3 Use a rotary phone
4 Superlative ending
5 Peak of a wave
6 Prejudice
7 Turf
8 Place of honor, at dinnertime
9 Egg, biologically
10 Bigfoot's cousin
11 In due time
16 Burglar's booty
20 Intention
21 Sodium chloride
22 Send electronically
23 Firmament
24 Away from WSW
25 Rep. or Dem.
26 — Leno
27 Debtor's letters
28 Rotating part
29 Dined
31 Number suggested by 53-Across
34 Autumn mo.
35 Confined, with "up"
37 Soothing remedy
38 Forehead
39 Old Italian money
40 Gel in a petri dish
41 Primary
42 Dog food brand
43 Pace
44 Engrave
46 "No seats" sign
47 Winter mo.

Solution time: 21 mins.

P	O	T			O	H	S		F	A	L	A
R	U	H	R		B	A	H		I	C	O	N
E	Z	R	A		I	R	E		L	E	W	D
P	O	U	N	D		E	L	S	E			
			K	I	D		F	O	N	D	U	E
P	A	J	A	M	A	S		N	O	E	N	D
O	V	U	M		Y	O	M		T	A	T	E
M	E	T	A	L		S	A	F	F	R	O	N
P	R	E	T	O	R		G	O	O			
			E	B	O	N		B	U	G	G	Y
M	E	N	U		D	O	E		N	O	L	O
A	G	A	R		E	O	N		D	O	E	R
D	O	G	S		O	N	E		F	E	E	

Yesterday's answer 3-30



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Norah Jones, 31; Celine Dion 42, Eric Clapton, 65, Warren Beatty, 73

Happy Birthday: You will have to deal with emotional issues head on. There is so much you can accomplish once you clear the air and set the stage for your personal accomplishments. Your quick mind and physical reaction to whatever is going on in your life will keep you ahead of any competition you face. Strive for the best of everything. Your numbers are 5, 9, 16, 24, 32, 38, 42

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't limit the people you deal with and don't let them stand in your way either. It's important to recognize what you have to contribute. Someone you need a favor from will reciprocate if you make a gracious gesture. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Listen carefully, so you don't miss important information about a deal that will influence your future. Getting all worked up is not the answer. Instead, take notes, ask questions and stick to the rules. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't say no to an invitation that involves children or seniors. You will discover something new that will make a difference to the outcome of a project or goal you are working toward. Keep things simple and work at your own pace. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You'll face restrictions and added responsibilities at home. Prepare to deal with problems that concern both older and younger family members. You may find yourself in a no-win situation. Don't let your personal problems stand in the way of your professional success. ✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Make whatever changes are required to help you feel more comfortable in your surroundings. A work-friendly area will improve your outlook, attitude and ability to get things done. The more creative you are, the better. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Make choices based on what you want to do, not what everyone thinks you should do. A different approach to something you've tried before but failed at will give you a new perspective for the future. Your diversity will attract attention and help. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't limit what you can accomplish because you are afraid to tell it like it is. Your input will make the difference between a workable, good relationship and a partnership that fails. An aggressive move on your part will show your ability to take charge. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): The more interest you gather, the more options you will have. A sensitive matter should be kept a secret for the time being in order to avoid an emotional scene. Stick close to home and avoid any sort of power struggle. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): A chance to make a good investment is within reach. A change in plans due to an unexpected development or responsibility will leave you scrambling. Get together with people who share your interests. Don't exaggerate. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't take on too much or travel too far. You can expect to face frustrations and limitations. A love problem will arise that will make you question your current situation. Know the facts before you disagree with someone. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't let old debts drag you down. You need to create a situation that will allow you financial maneuverability. Love is in the stars if you frequent places where you used to enjoy spending time. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You don't have to rush into a personal situation. Moving too fast will lead to uncertainty about your position and your personal status. Don't feel threatened by what others do when you have just as much to offer. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive and emotional and you respond quickly, ready to take on whatever comes your way. You are a good friend and loyal companion.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	3				6		9	
4		9		2	3			7
	8	2						
							4	3
	6			3			5	
7	2							
						6	2	
3			5	8		9		1
	9		4				3	

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

5	6	8	9	3	2	7	1	4
9	7	2	1	4	5	3	8	6
3	4	1	6	8	7	9	2	5
1	2	9	5	7	3	4	6	8
7	8	3	2	6	4	5	9	1
4	5	6	8	1	9	2	7	3
8	9	7	4	5	1	6	3	2
6	3	5	7	2	8	1	4	9
2	1	4	3	9	6	8	5	7

Difficulty Level ★ 3/29

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SOUTH GEORGIA: FULL OF LIFE AGAIN **Solution: 10 letters**

E	D	R	A	W	D	E	S	L	U	H	E	S	L	E
D	A	I	N	E	S	E	V	L	A	S	S	I	E	N
N	S	V	A	L	L	I	R	K	A	C	C	G	I	I
A	E	E	R	E	V	K	I	N	O	E	N	G	T	A
L	D	R	G	A	O	S	T	T	B	A	S	R	H	L
T	N	U	L	H	L	L	I	E	R	S	K	A	E	P
E	A	O	L	A	A	A	R	E	O	N	I	N	S	Y
H	S	R	N	C	S	G	C	F	C	O	V	D	A	R
S	R	D	T	E	D	Y	O	H	K	W	S	E	L	U
H	E	I	A	E	D	R	F	G	A	Y	U	U	L	B
T	I	C	L	R	T	D	P	R	O	N	H	R	I	S
U	C	I	A	U	R	A	L	I	O	L	N	R	T	I
O	A	L	N	O	G	Ⓛ	Ⓤ	Ⓢ	Ⓗ	Z	D	E	O	L
S	L	A	J	E	A	S	L	E	S	S	E	V	L	A
A	G	F	T	W	A	P	E	N	G	U	I	N	F	S

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Allardyce Range, Andes, Birds, Channels, Drygalski, Edward, Elsehul, Fjord, Flotillas, Fortuna, Frozen, Glaciers, Gold, Grandeur, Hauge, Husvik, Iceberg, Island, Kohl, Krill, Larvae, Leith, Lush, Olav, Paget, Peaks, Penguin, River, Rock, Sailed, Salisbury Plain, Salvesen, Scotia Sea, Seals, Shetland, Ship, Snowy, South, Vessels, Wall

Yesterday's Answer: Eid al-Fitr

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There's nothing Super about the Pittsburgh Steelers anymore.
25
28 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2009
Sports
NMIVA ta for grass
Angamwas rules 4-person
Tribune
FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
TUESDAY DECEMBER 15, 2009
XIX, Issue No. 299
Fitial eyes Cepeda's re-appointment to NMC board. PAGE
DPH to ask for extension of emergency declaration. PAGE
$1.35M earmarks for NMI now up for Obama's
By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
The fate of the $1.35 million in CNMI special projects funding requested by Del-
egate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) now rests with President Obama, after the conference report on the omnibus Fiscal Year 2010 spending bill cleared the U.S. Senate on Sunday.
Sablan's request for $1.35 million to fund seven programs and projects is contained in the Conference Report on Fiscal Year 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act, a $447-billion spending measure for
Fitial: Ombudsman shouldn't accommodate 'overstayers'
10 DAYS to go before Christmas
OPINION METER
This week's poll:
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Immigration

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WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

K THROAT E R M I T

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Find today's solution in this section

Duke, Coach K back in Final Four

HOUSTON (AP)—Mike Krzyzewski insisted all along the drought didn't bother him.

Sure, he hadn't been to a Final Four since 2004. But there was no need to put extra pressure on this Duke team just because the last five fell short.

Hey, Coach K, look who's chasing another national championship.

Duke restored some order to a topsy-turvy NCAA tournament on Sunday, getting a career-high 29 points from Nolan Smith in a 78-71 victory over Baylor that put Krzyzewski and the Blue Devils back in college basketball's biggest event.

"It's not about the moments that I've been in, it's the moments that your players put you in right now," Krzyzewski said. "I'm really happy for this group. ... It's as close a team as I've had. You want great things to happen for people who are great with us."

Jon Scheyer added five 3-pointers and scored 20 for Duke, ending Baylor's run to redemption in the South Regional final. The Blue Devils became the only No. 1 seed to advance to Indianapolis and earned their 11th Final Four berth under Krzyzewski.

"I don't know if it's a relief, but it's nice that no one can say anymore that we haven't been to a Final Four in so many years," Kyle Singler said.

Now, Singler and his teammates get the chance at a championship that every player who goes through the program expects to have.

"I don't know that it's fully hit me," said Scheyer, one of the three Duke seniors. "I'm sure after the year I'll have a better appreciation. But right now, I'm just ecstatic."

Smith hit the tiebreaking 3 with 3:33 remaining immediately after missing a free throw. Senior forward Lance Thomas grabbed the rebound—one of Duke's 17 offensive boards after halftime.

"I can't put it into words," Thomas said. "It took us four years to get here and we're not done yet."

The Blue Devils will play East Regional champion West Virginia in the national semifinals Saturday night. They have won 11 of their last 12 regional finals under Krzyzewski, but haven't won a national title since 2001.

Coach K made his first Final Four with Duke in 1986 and hadn't had a gap this long between trips.

To end the drought, Duke had to win at Reliant Stadium—only 3 1/2 hours from Baylor's campus. Most of the crowd of 47,492 was dressed in the green and gold of the Bears.

"We played against a great team," Krzyzewski said. "It was such a well-played game, and we were fortunate to win."

Smith and Scheyer helped the Blue Devils (33-5) offset a poor game from Singler, who was 0 for 10 from the field and made only five free throws. It was the first time in his college career the junior forward failed to hit a field goal.

LaceDarius Dunn had 22 points and Ekpe Udoh scored 18 for the third-seeded Bears (28-8), whose program was in shambles when coach Scott Drew took over in the wake of murder and scandal less than seven years ago.

Drew took the Bears from tatters to the cusp of their first Final Four appearance in 60 years. After three consecutive 20-win seasons and an inspiring postseason run, maybe Baylor can be recognized more for its success now than the tragic summer of 2003 that is finally starting to feel like a long time ago.

"I really hope so and I really feel it has," Drew said, his voice quivering. "I do really want to thank all the fans in the state of Texas."

After tying the game for the 12th time on a free throw with 3:36 left, Smith missed his second attempt. But Thomas grabbed one of his nine rebounds and quickly passed the ball right back to Smith, who hit a 3-pointer from the right wing to put Duke up 64-61.

Scheyer then extended the lead to six with his fifth 3-pointer.

"Those two 3s in a row, by Nolan and then Jon, those were big-time plays," Krzyzewski said. "The big guys kicked it out and those are the best 3s to take."

And the long-range shots were the best for Duke against Baylor's tenacious zone defense featuring a combination of a 7-footer and a pair of 6-10 players.

The Blue Devils made 11 of 23 3-pointers (48 percent)—and shot only 11 of 38 from inside the arc.

But they didn't need a miracle shot on the 18th anniversary of Christian Laettner's game-winner against Kentucky in the 1992 tournament.

With Baylor desperately trying to get the ball back after a turnover by Tweety Carter, there was a scuffle by the sideline following a whistle and Quincy Acy was called for a technical foul. Scheyer hit both free throws, pushing the lead to 10 with 1:19 left.

The fairy-tale ending wasn't meant to be for the Bears—at least this year.

"It's not over for this program. It was a great season," said Dunn, the junior guard who had obviously shed tears before the postgame interview. "Teammates should hold their head up high and be proud of the things we accomplished this year."

Carter and Acy had 12 points each for Baylor. Udoh had 10 rebounds, six assists and five blocks.

Drew was 32 when he was hired and had been a head coach only one season, winning 20 games at Valparaiso after nine years there as his father's assistant. He had to rebuild in the powerful Big 12 with reduced scholarships and a roster decimated by the transfers of the top three scorers after that tragic summer in 2003 when Patrick Dennehy was shot to death by a teammate.

Baylor made it to the NCAA tournament two years ago, when it lost in the first round to Purdue, and to the NIT championship game last April.

The Bears were picked 10th in the preseason poll by the Big 12 coaches at the beginning of this season after losing three 1,000-point scorers to graduation. But they were the last Big 12 team still playing.

After Dunn darted through traffic for a layup and then made two free throws, the Bears were up 57-54 with just under 6 minutes left. Their lead didn't last long.

Scheyer missed a 3-pointer, but Mason Plumlee got the rebound and threw the ball right back to the senior guard—who hit from about 25 feet to tie it.

AP

Duke's Lance Thomas puts back a shot against Baylor's Ekpe Udoh during the second half of the NCAA South Regional college basketball final in Houston, Sunday, March 28, 2010.

No. 5 Michigan State 70, No. 2 Kansas State 69

At St. Louis, the players come and go, the years pass. About the only thing that doesn't change is Tom Izzo and Michigan State's mastery in March.

The fifth-seeded Spartans are on their way to their second straight Final Four and sixth in 12 years after Raymar Morgan's free throw with less than 2 seconds left lifted Michigan State to a 70-69 victory over Tennessee in the Midwest Regional final Sunday.

"There is nothing greater than going to a Final Four that I know of," Izzo said, "except winning it."

No team in the country—not North Carolina, not Kansas, not UCLA, not Kentucky—has been better during the Spartans' run. And all six of those trips have come under Izzo, the hard-nosed coach who preaches defense, rebounding, defense, physical play, and have we mentioned defense?

Izzo, who took over from longtime mentor Jud Heathcote for the 1995-96 season, is 6-1 in the regional finals. His only loss was to top-seeded Texas in 2003.

"Tom Izzo does his best in the NCAA tournament," said Magic Johnson, who sat in the Michigan State cheering section and embraced Izzo after the game. "He loves the big moment. He understands what he needs to do against every team. He comes up with a great game plan every single time. He deserves all the credit in the world."

The Spartans, last year's national runner-up, will be looking for championship No. 3 next weekend in Indianapolis. They play Butler, also a No. 5 seed and sure to be the hometown favorite, in the semifinals Saturday night.

"They're hot right now. They're playing some of their best basketball," Morgan said. "But we're also hot right now. We're playing some of our best basketball."

Michigan State is the only team from last year's Final Four to make it back. Heck, North Carolina, which demolished the Spartans in the title game, didn't even make the NCAA tournament. Neither did Connecticut, and Villanova was knocked out in the second round.

How's this for some symmetry? This happens to be the 10th anniversary of the "Flintstones," the team that gave Michigan State its second national title. Highlights from that run were included in the video montage of past championships that played on the Edward Jones Dome's massive Jumbotron during halftime.

The Spartans (28-8) led by as many as eight in the second half, but Brian Williams pulled sixth-seeded Tennessee (28-9) within 69-68 on a putback with 2:10 left. Korie Lucious, who took over as point guard after 2009 Big Ten player of the year Kalin Lucas ruptured his Achilles' tendon last weekend, missed the front end of a 1-and-1 with 29 seconds left and Scotty Hopson got the rebound.

Hopson was fouled at the other end, and made the first. But after a Michigan State timeout, he missed the second and Lucious—generously listed at 5-foot-11—ended up with the rebound. Morgan was fouled by J.P. Prince with 1.8 seconds left and made the first. After timeouts by both teams, Morgan bricked the second shot on purpose.

Williams came up with the rebound and Tennessee called a quick timeout. But Prince fumbled the inbounds pass and had to heave up a prayer from midcourt just before the buzzer.

"It's just tough, 1 second," Prince said. "You want to shoot it perfect but you've got to rush. You don't want it to come down to a half-court shot, but that's what it came down to."

Prince wasn't even close, and Michigan State and its fans—led by Johnson, the Spartan-in-chief—began the celebration that's practically become a rite of spring.

"What's unique is it's been a little bit more bumpy road," Izzo said.

Bumpy? More like missing big chunks of asphalt.

While Izzo is a master at reloading on the fly, this might have been his toughest test. In addition to Lucas' injury, Delvon Roe is playing on a torn meniscus and Chris Allen is nursing an aching foot.

The Spartans have been forced to go with an offense-by-committee but, somehow, it works. Durrell Summers, who's taken over the bulk of the scoring, finished with 21 points on 8-of-10 shooting despite playing just 9 minutes in the first half because of foul trouble. Morgan and Draymond Green added 13 each, and Morgan also had 10 rebounds.

"Things happen throughout the season," Summers said. "Once we got to tournament time, we said we'll have a fresh start."

Tennessee, meanwhile, will have to take comfort in knowing it got further than any other Volunteers team. This was their first appearance in the regional finals, and there is no question they belonged. They made their first six shots of the game - going 4 for 4 from 3-point range, shot 51 percent overall and had four players in double figures, led by senior Wayne Chism's 13 points.

Prince finished with 12 on 5-of-5 shooting, and Williams had 11.

"It's going to stick with us," senior Bobby Maze said. "Anytime we watch college games or during tournament time, we'll always come back to that very moment where we were just too short."

Tennessee has long been a basketball powerhouse—in women's hoops. But coach Bruce Pearl has energized the men's program, as evidenced by the orange-hued dome and the Vols' first appearance in the regional final. Few would have thought the Tennessee men would last longer than the top-seeded women, who were beaten by No. 4 Baylor on Saturday in the regional semifinals.

"We came to St. Louis expecting to win two games and we played pretty well both nights," Pearl said. "We saw all that orange out there. This isn't close to home, either. They got in their car and they drove here. I think they enjoyed this group tremendously."

Though they were going against a team that oozes experience—"Final Fours are a big thing in this program," Green said Saturday—the Vols came in with swagger and strut.

But confidence is no match for toughness, and few can match that of Michigan State.

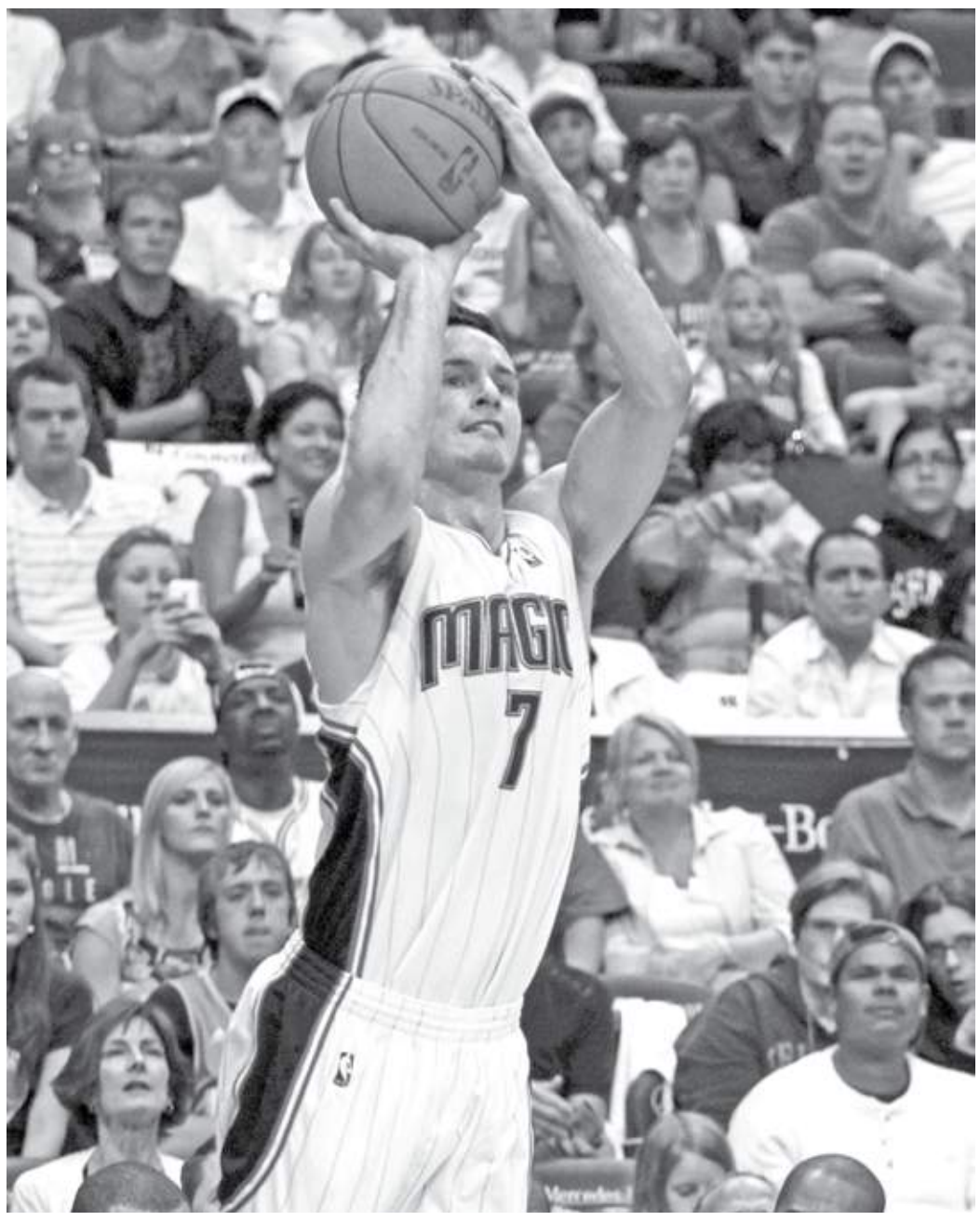
"I said (before the game), `You put yourself in a position where you have a chance to do something you talked about,'" Izzo said. "Not many people get a chance to do that."

Redick lifts Magic past Nuggets

ORLANDO, Florida (AP)— J.J. Redick had 23 points and career highs of eight assists and seven rebounds in place of an injured Vince Carter as he helped the Orlando Magic beat the Denver Nuggets 103-97 on Sunday night.

Redick played a career-high 46 minutes after Carter injured his right big toe. The Magic also got a big boost with 19 points from reserve Ryan Anderson for their 13th win in the last 15 games.

Carmelo Anthony had 26 points and eight rebounds, and Chauncey Billups finished with 18 points for the struggling Nuggets, who have lost four of their past five games.



AP

Orlando Magic guard J.J. Redick shoots a 3-pointer against the Denver Nuggets during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Orlando, Fla., on Sunday, March 28, 2010.

Spurs 94, Celtics 73

At Boston, Manu Ginobili scored 28 points, and Richard Jefferson had 16 points and 11 rebounds to lead San Antonio over the Celtics.

Tim Duncan had eight points and nine rebounds, and DeJuan Blair added seven points and 11 boards for the Spurs, who have won 12 of 16 to move into a three-way share of sixth place with Portland and Oklahoma City in the Western Conference.

Paul Pierce scored 18 points, and Kevin Garnett had 12 points and 10 rebounds for Boston. It was the Celtics' lowest point total of the season, their worst home loss of the year and their third loss by 20 or more since Feb. 25.

Trail Blazers 92, Thunder 87

At Oklahoma City, Andre Miller scored 26 points, Brandon Roy added 20 as Portland won to move into a share of sixth place with the Thunder in the Western Conference.

The Blazers have won 11 of their last 13 games to strengthen their position in the West playoff race and can clinch a spot in the postseason with three wins in the last eight games.

Durant finished with 29 points for Oklahoma City, which was coming off an impressive blowout win against the West-leading Los Angeles Lakers only two nights earlier.

Cavaliers 97, Kings 90

At Cleveland, LeBron James scored 23 of his 34 points in the second half and Antawn Jamison added 26 as the Cavs welcomed back center Zydrunas Ilgauskas with a victory over Sacramento.

With Cleveland leading by four, James made a crucial 3-pointer with 2:02 left and then had a rebound and steal to help seal it. Cleveland went 10-0 against the Pacific Division this season.

Beno Udrih had his first career triple-double (18 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds) for the Kings, who because of injuries dressed only eight players and then lost forward Dominic McGuire in the first quarter with a foot injury.

Bucks 108, Grizzlies 103, OT

At Milwaukee, John Salmons scored 10 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter and overtime as the Bucks rallied to avoid a third straight loss.

Rookie Brandon Jennings added 29 points, eight assists and seven rebounds, and Andrew Bogut had 18 points and 11 rebounds in his return after missing a game with a sore back.

Zach Randolph led Memphis with 31 points and 15 rebounds.

Hawks 94, Pacers 84

At Atlanta, Josh Smith had 21 points and 13 rebounds as the Hawks ended Indiana's five-game winning streak while increasing their own winning run at home to eight games.

Troy Murphy scored 21 for Indiana, which was trying to win six straight games for the first time since 2005. Danny Granger, who was coming off a career-high 44 points in a home win Friday over Utah, finished with 18. He had averaged 31.9 over the previous seven games.

Heat 97, Raptors 94

At Miami, Dwyane Wade scored 32 points as the Heat rallied from a 17-point deficit to beat Toronto.

Miami outscored Toronto 19-7 in the final 6:12, taking the lead for good at 91-89 on Carlos Arroyo's jumper with 59 seconds remaining. Arroyo converted eight free throws in the final 22 seconds and Udonis Haslem scored 11 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter for the Heat, in sixth place in the Eastern Conference.

Bulls 110, Pistons 103

At Auburn Hills, Flip Murray scored 23 points while Derrick Rose added 19 points and nine assists as Chicago beat hapless Detroit. The Pistons have lost eight straight and 15 of 17. The victory gave the Bulls their first season sweep of Detroit since the Michael Jordan-led team that won 72 games in 1995-96. They have now beaten the Pistons seven straight times.

Brad Miller added 17 points for Chicago, while Hakim Warrick scored 14 off the bench. Richard Hamilton led all scorers with 29 points, while Rodney Stuckey overcame a twisted ankle to add 20.

Suns 111, Timberwolves 105

At Minneapolis, Amare Stoudemire had 30 points and 17 rebounds, helping Phoenix hold off Minnesota, which matched a club record with its 16th loss in a row.

Kevin Love had 23 points and a career-high 22 rebounds, and Al Jefferson put up 19 points and 16 rebounds, leading the Timberwolves on a startling second-half comeback after falling behind by 25 points in the second quarter.

Steve Nash finished with 14 points and 11 assists for the Suns, who have won a season-high seven straight games and 21 of their last 26.

Warriors 121, Clippers 103

At Los Angeles, Reggie Williams scored 25 points in his second NBA start as the Golden State Warriors beat the Clippers, putting Don Nelson within three victories of overtaking Lenny Wilkens as the coach with the most regular season wins in NBA history.

The Warriors have nine chances left on the schedule to keep Nelson from having to wait an entire summer before breaking Wilkens' record of 1,332 victories. Rasual Butler scored 21 points and Eric Gordon added 20 for the Clippers, who have lost 11 of their last 13.

Els loses ground, but not lead

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)— Three hours of rain put a stop to the final round at Bay Hill.

It did little to cool off Ernie Els.

Even though Els will have a two-shot lead with four holes remaining when the Arnold Palmer Invitational resumes Monday, the Big Easy couldn't help but think about how hard the task had become.

One minute he was five shots head and cruising toward his second straight victory on the PGA Tour. Then came a shot into the water, another shot into the sand, and Els was facing a restless night.

"Obviously, I'm not totally at ease with myself right now," Els said. "I'm a little angry or disappointed or whatever you want to call it. There's still work out there to be done, and I've got to get it done. I've basically got to go out there and play hard tomorrow morning, four holes as good as I can."

Els was at 11-under par through 14 holes when thunderstorms halted the final round, and rain soaked Bay Hill over the next three hours. Kevin Na was at 9 under and on the front of the green on the 15th hole, facing an 80-foot birdie putt.

The final round is to resume at 10 a.m. in the first Monday finish at Bay Hill since 1982.

"I was playing well and Ernie looked like he was struggling," Na said. "Probably good for Ernie that they called it so he can clear his head a little bit. For me, I need to make birdies to catch Ernie."

Ben Curtis and Chris Couch, playing in the final group with Els were at 8 under. Couch still had a 15-foot par putt on the par-3 14th. Retief Goosen also was 8 under through 17 holes.

J.P. Hayes and D.J. Trahan each shot 70 and were finished at 6-under 282. Phil Mickelson, who started his week with a 58 during a casual round in the California desert, ended it with a 77.

There's a reason Els was so angry despite his two-shot lead. He was five shots clear until hitting from the heavy sand of a bunker into the water on the 13th hole, leading to double bogey. He followed that with a tee shot into the left bunker that led to bogey on the 14th.

Even more annoying was the sound of a siren to suspend play, the sound of heavy rain on the roof, and the announcement that the course was too wet for any more golf Sunday evening.

"Not a very nice way to go into a bit of a break," Els said. "I'll be thinking about it all night. It won't be a very peaceful night, I don't think, but I'm going to come out tomorrow and get it done somehow."

Els went two years without winning, and was poised to only wait two weeks this time. He ended the longest drought of his career at Doral with a four-shot victory, and is trying to become the first player since Tiger Woods in 2001 to win twice on the Florida swing.

He started the final round with a one-shot lead and quickly seized control with a 12-foot birdie putt on the fifth, then reached the fringe in two on the par-5 sixth for a simple birdie to build a three-shot lead.

The 40-year-old South African appeared to be bothered on the eighth hole when he was about to hit a difficult shot into the wind and over the water, only to back off when he heard Couch hit out of turn. Els then went into a bunker and made bogey, and he drove into the right rough on No. 9 and had to play short of the green.

Couch hit his approach into 4 feet, and it looked as though they would make the turn in a tie for the lead. Els, however, pitched in from 53 yards short of the green for an unlikely birdie that put him at 12 under and allowed him to keep his two-shot lead.

From the fairway bunker at No. 10, Els hit to 15 feet and made another birdie, and he was on his way. Then came his mistakes—the water short of the 13th green, a bunker left of the 14th green, and it was a game again.

"There's no excuse for those bogeys or double bogeys I made," Els said. "Just came at the wrong time, and now I'm in a big battle tomorrow morning depending on conditions. It could be a wild finish."

Couch, whose only victory came in New Orleans in 2006, needs a victory to get into the Masters for the first time. The other top five players on the leaderboard already are set for Augusta National.

Only one player had managed to break 70 in the final round - D.A. Points, who had a 69 and was tied for 17th.

If there's any good omen for Els, his only other victory at Bay Hill was in 1998 during a week of bad weather. He had to play 36 holes on Sunday and won by four shots.

6 JUNIOR

From Page 28

3-6, 6-4, while Miller booked a Final Four ticket after downing Daniel Park, 6-4, 6-0. Nathan Nutting and Jones drew byes in the first around and automatically moved to the semis.

In the girls U18, Thea Minor lost only one game en route to claiming the championship. She shut out Ilia Corella in the semis, 6-0, 6-0, and beat sister Theecel in the finals, 6-0, 6-1. Theecel had to win two matches to arrange a finals duel with her younger sister. The older Minor first prevailed over Amy Arenovski, 6-4, 6-0, and stunned Jodel Fernandez in the semis, 6-2, 6-3, to gain a finals ticket.

In the U14 division, Jake Lee ruled the boys competition, while Mikayla Lopez dominated the girls side.

Lee took the title after edging Angelo Jones in the finals, 8-2. Lee drew a bye in the first round then defeated Dylan Ackerman and Carl Dela Cruz to make it to the finals.

In the lower half of the bracket, Jones topped Seiya Eda and Quintin Ramsey to arrange a semis tiff with the second-seeded Chris Cajigan. Jones then pulled off an upset over Cajigan in the semis 9-7, before losing to Lee in the finals.

In the girls U14, Lopez gave up only two points to win the championship. She beat Gabrielle Race in the semis, 8-1, and had a similar 8-1 triumph in the finals over Emily Jones.

The boys' 10-and-under crown went to Moris Villanueva, who defeated Michael Jones in the finals, 8-0. Villanueva started his bid for the title with an 8-1 win over Alfie Manlambayan and then the former advanced to the finals after an 8-2 victory over Luther Lizama.

Michael Jones edged Clayton Izuka in the quarterfinals, 8-4, and then eked out an 11-9 triumph over Steven Goodwin to set up a finals showdown against Villanueva.

Nine players battled for the girls U10 title with Sakura Imaya prevailing after beating Isabel Heras in the finals, 9-7. Imaya was at the bottom half of the draw and won her first match against Riley Anne Buenaventura, 8-1. Imaya then clinched a finals berth when she topped Liza Atalig in the semis, 9-7.

In the upper bracket, Heras blanked Anna Calvert, 8-0, and then stunned top seed Carol Lee, 10-8, to notch the second finals seat.

The adults doubles were also played over the weekend and results will be published tomorrow. The second and final week of the PIC tournament will run from April 2 to 4.

OL' ACES

From Page 28

Ol'Aces' errors. However, that was the best that the Twins could do, as Eina capped his impressive stint on the mound by striking out the Twins' first three batters at the bottom of the sixth inning.

On offense, Ol'Aces had a six-run top of the second, drilling three runs off Twins' errors, drawing a two-run homer from Michael Muna, and getting a one-run triple from catcher Virolanson Secharmidal. Ol'Aces added two more runs in the sixth inning.

Braves 13, Hustlers 0

In the first game, the Braves had a walk in the park against the Hustlers, 13-0.

David Malwuebog hit a three-run double at the bottom of the first, giving the Braves a good start as the team led, 7-0. The Braves added six more runs in the second inning behind Joseph Guerrero's two-run single.

On defense, J.J. Lifoifoi started on the mound for the Braves, logged four strikeouts, and allowed no hits. Jay Kalen relieved Lifoifoi in the fourth inning with the former allowing only a single.

Dragons 15, Athletics 3

In the second game, the Dragons crushed Athletics, 15-3.

Catcher Alden Ngeskebei went 3-for-5 at bat, making a three-run homer at the top of the sixth inning and logging four RBIs.

A.J. Deleon Guerrero also hit 3-for-5 and added two runs, while Chico Bondon was 3-for-4 and also scored two runs.

The Athletics' three runs came from David Philip's two-run triple in the third and one-run single in the fifth.

Falcons 9, IT&E 2

In the last game on Saturday, the Falcons clawed IT&E, 9-2.

Chris Sablan had a two-run single at the top of the first and gave the Falcons a 5-0 lead. The Falcons then scored three of their last four runs off IT&E's errors to nail a seven-run win.

IT&E lit up the scoreboard only on two occasions—in the third inning on Falcons' miscue at center field and another error at left field in the fifth inning.

AQUA

From Page 28

World Resort had chances to steal the game, but Dennis Vinas committed crucial turnovers. He lost the ball at midcourt against Ziddy Johanes and then recovered the leather. After his counter steal, Vinas went for a fastbreak layup, but missed. He then gave up a foul after the miss, sending Torres to the stripe with the score tied, 79-all.

Torres, who earlier muffed both his charities, canned both, giving Aqua Resort the lead, 81-79, with 24 seconds left on the clock.

Wowie Abuel pulled up for a triple in World Resort's next possession and missed. Gil Gapor grabbed the rebound, was fouled, and split his charities. Another World Resort botched offensive set returned the leather to Aqua Resort and Lizama went 1-for-2 from the foul line to secure the win for the Achugao-based team.

McGraw-Hill 96, Hard Rock 88

In the first game on Sunday, McGraw-Hill downed Hard Rock, 96-88.

McGraw-Hill improved to a 3-4 mark, while Hard Rock dropped to a 0-7 slate.

Hard Rock led in the first quarter, 21-18, but could not hang on to the driver's seat, when McGraw-Hill behind gunner Rufino Aguon began hitting its target in the second canto. Aguon drilled three triples in the second quarter, which ended with McGraw-Hill on top, 46-39. Hard Rock never recovered from thereon.

Mobil 104, SGH/ Docomo 102

Jun Estolas and Bryan Ajoste drilled 12 points apiece in the fourth period to power Mobil to a 104-102 win over Saipan Grand Hotel/Docomo on Saturday.

Mobil was behind at the end of the third period, 74-81, before Estolas and Ajoste joined forces in the fourth-quarter surge.

Ajoste finished with 34 points, while Estolas chipped in 28.

TBK 121, PIC 75

TBK Auto Shop played in the second game on Saturday and demolished Pacific Islands Club, 121-75.

TBK had an explosive first half, capitalizing on a depleted PIC crew. PIC was sans Darwin Barbo and Ryan Sanciangco in the first half, which ended with TBK way ahead 70-35.

Kae Bernardo paced TBK with 26 points and four others also scored 20 plus markers against PIC.

SATURDAY
First Game

Mobil 104 – Ajoste 34, Estolas 28, Ruluked 10, Manalo 9, Torres 7, Galzote 6, Rejano 4, Jose 2, Deocares 2, Demapan 2.

SGH/Docomo 102 – Lee 38, Sison 28, Maliwanag 25, De Leon 9.

Scoring by quarters: 32-22, 55-53, 74-81, 104-102.

Second Game

TBK 121 – Bernardo 26, Castro 24, De Vero 23, Demapan 20, Capalad 10, Pantaleon 10, Sevilla 4, Mallari 2, Laquian 2.

PIC 75 –D. Barbo 18, Abuy 17, Pepito14, Dacanay 8, Sanciangco 7, Baterina 4, Yabut 3, Danipog 2, K. Barbo 2.

Scoring by quarters: 33-17, 70-35, 98-56, 121-75.

SUNDAY
First Game

McGraw Hill 96 – Mendiola 21, Aguon 14, Diaz 12, Buniag 11, Cabrera 9, Mendez 8, Villagomez 7, Matson 6, Hideo 4, Guerrero 2.

Hard Rock 88 – Paraiso 20, Tengco 18, Tiamzon 11, Lagrio 10, Besmonte 7, Mendoza 7, Dionisio 7, Perez 4, Aranda 4.

Scoring by quarters: 18-21, 46-39, 68-61, 96-88.

Second Game

Aqua Resort 83 – Gapor 22, Lizama 19, Mina 12, Aquino 11, Johanes 7, Acosta 6, Torres 6, Mc. Achas 4.

World Resort 79 – Vinas 22, Abuel 21, Olaitiman 20, Ritual 7, Navarro 4, Tabamo 3, Wabinga 2.

Scoring by quarters: 19-20, 40-36, 62-56, 83-79.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
y-Boston	47	26	.644	—
Toronto	35	37	.486	11 1/2
New York	26	46	.361	20 1/2
Philadelphia	26	47	.356	21
New Jersey	9	64	.123	38

Southeast Division

x-Orlando	52	22	.703	—
x-Atlanta	47	26	.644	4 1/2
Miami	40	34	.541	12
Charlotte	38	34	.528	13
Washington	21	51	.292	30

Central Division

y-Cleveland	58	16	.784	—
Milwaukee	40	32	.556	17
Chicago	35	38	.479	22 1/2
Indiana	27	47	.365	31
Detroit	23	50	.315	34 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

x-Dallas	48	25	.658	—
San Antonio	44	28	.611	3 1/2
Memphis	38	35	.521	10
Houston	36	36	.500	11 1/2
New Orleans	34	40	.459	14 1/2

Northwest Division

x-Denver	48	26	.649	—
x-Utah	48	26	.649	—
Oklahoma City	44	28	.611	3
Portland	45	29	.608	3
Minnesota	14	60	.189	34

Pacific Division

x-L.A. Lakers	54	19	.740	—
Phoenix	47	26	.644	7
L.A. Clippers	27	46	.370	27
Sacramento	24	50	.324	30 1/2
Golden State	21	52	.288	33

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Milwaukee 108, Memphis 103, OT
Cleveland 97, Sacramento 90
Atlanta 94, Indiana 84
Chicago 110, Detroit 103
Miami 97, Toronto 94
Orlando 103, Denver 97
Phoenix 111, Minnesota 105
Portland 92, Oklahoma City 87
San Antonio 94, Boston 73
Golden State 121, L.A. Clippers 103

NBA LEADERS

SCORING

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
James, CLE	72	731	557	2147	29.8
Durant, OKC	72	691	646	2132	29.6
Anthony, DEN	61	620	469	1760	28.9
Bryant, LAL	68	673	408	1844	27.1
Wade, MIA	70	649	484	1850	26.4
Ellis, GOL	61	603	280	1556	25.5
Nowitzki, DAL	72	636	458	1766	24.5
Granger, IND	54	424	308	1295	24.0
Bosh, TOR	65	558	426	1550	23.8
Stoudemire, PHX	73	616	442	1675	22.9
Roy, POR	59	458	320	1306	22.1
Johnson, ATL	71	593	211	1512	21.3
Randolph, MEM	72	593	309	1508	20.9
Jackson, CHA	72	543	306	1504	20.9
Evans, SAC	64	473	318	1296	20.3
Rose, CHI	69	584	213	1393	20.2
Lee, NYK	71	595	237	1427	20.1
Maggette, GOL	63	416	414	1257	20.0
Gay, MEM	71	539	266	1407	19.8
Billups, DEN	65	361	422	1286	19.8

FG PERCENTAGE

	FG	FGA	PCT
Howard, ORL	461	759	.607
Perkins, BOS	289	479	.603
Hilario, DEN	390	658	.593
Gasol, MEM	377	646	.584
Bynum, LAL	392	688	.570
Horford, ATL	426	759	.561
Boozer, UTA	557	1002	.556
Stoudemire, PHX	616	1109	.555
Lee, NYK	595	1087	.547
Millsap, UTA	343	630	.544

REBOUNDS

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, ORL	74	262	724	986	13.3
Lee, NYK	71	202	643	845	11.9
Randolph, MEM	72	299	552	851	11.8
Camby, POR	67	228	553	781	11.7
Boozer, UTA	71	161	628	789	11.1
Bosh, TOR	65	190	521	711	10.9
Wallace, CHA	67	137	563	700	10.4
Bogut, MIL	65	197	468	665	10.2
Duncan, SAN	69	203	501	704	10.2
Murphy, IND	64	106	546	652	10.2

ASSISTS

	G	AST	AVG
Nash, PHX	72	800	11.1
Paul, NOR	41	444	10.8
Williams, UTA	68	709	10.4
Rondo, BOS	72	703	9.8
Kidd, DAL	71	655	9.2
James, CLE	72	616	8.6
Davis, LAC	71	564	7.9
Westbrook, OKC	72	567	7.9
Harris, NJN	55	378	6.9
Wade, MIA	70	468	6.7

ARNOLD PALMER INVITATIONAL SCORES

ORLANDO, Florida (AP)–Scores Sunday at the Arnold Palmer Invitational, a $6 million PGA tournament played at the par-72, 7,353-yard Bay Hill Club & Lodge course:

PARTIAL FOURTH ROUND

J.P. Hayes	70-72-70-70	–282
D.J. Trahan	69-68-75-70	–282
Steve Marino	70-70-72-72	–284
Bo Van Pelt	72-70-73-70	–285
Robert Allenby	68-73-72-72	–285
D.A. Points	73-72-72-69	–286
Briny Baird	72-72-70-72	–286
K.J. Choi	71-69-73-73	–286
Bill Haas	72-71-70-73	–286
Charles Howell III	72-72-71-72	–287
Sean O'Hair	70-73-71-73	–287
J.B. Holmes	66-74-77-70	–287
Brian Davis	74-71-73-70	–288
John Senden	71-74-70-74	–289
Ben Crane	69-74-73-73	–289
Jason Day	71-70-73-75	–289
Hunter Mahan	71-73-75-70	–289
Stephen Ames	73-71-71-75	–290
Erik Compton	72-71-73-74	–290
Scott Verplank	75-70-70-75	–290
Jerry Kelly	71-74-72-73	–290
Brandt Snedeker	72-72-70-76	–290
Phil Mickelson	71-67-75-77	–290
Stuart Appleby	70-74-70-76	–290
Rory Sabbatini	75-70-74-71	–290
Tim Petrovic	74-68-71-77	–290
Tim Clark	74-70-75-71	–290
Rod Pampling	74-70-71-76	–291
Marc Leishman	70-73-72-76	–291
Ryo Ishikawa	74-70-71-76	–291
Nathan Green	69-73-72-77	–291
Pat Perez	69-74-74-74	–291
Mike Weir	67-73-77-74	–291
George McNeill	69-71-73-78	–291
Ryan Moore	72-72-74-73	–291
Dustin Johnson	71-70-72-78	–291
Bryce Molder	74-70-75-72	–291
Rickie Fowler	73-72-74-73	–292
Sam Saunders	73-70-77-72	–292
Henrik Stenson	67-78-71-77	–293
Kris Blanks	74-69-73-77	–293
Charl Schwartzel	74-71-72-76	–293
Colin Montgomerie	72-71-71-79	–293
Matt Every	74-70-70-79	–293
Steve Stricker	69-71-79-74	–293
Stewart Cink	73-72-71-78	–294
Carl Pettersson	71-73-73-77	–294
Kevin Sutherland	70-73-76-75	–294
Chris DiMarco	69-73-75-78	–295
Jonathan Byrd	71-73-73-79	–296
Nick Watney	74-71-73-78	–296
Jason Dufner	69-72-73-83	–297
Daniel Chopra	74-71-70-82	–297
Heath Slocum	69-72-76-80	–297

LEADERBOARD

	SCORE	THRU
1. Ernie Els	1	14
2. Kevin Na	9	14
3. Retief Goosen	8	17
3. Ben Curtis	8	14
3. Chris Couch	8	13
6. Kevin Streelman	7	15
6. Edoardo Molinari	7	14
8. J.P. Hayes	6	F
8. D.J. Trahan	6	F
8. Davis Love III	6	17
8. Ryuji Imada	6	17
12. Steve Marino	4	F
12. Derek Lamely	4	15

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

SHIRLEY'S STANDINGS

MBI	7	1
World Resort	7	2
Aqua Resort	7	2
Pacific Islands Club	5	3
Mobil	6	3
Fiesta Resort	5	3
TBK	5	3
Shirley's	4	4
AON/NJ Plus	4	3
Bank of Guam	3	4
McGraw-Hill	3	4
Pepsi	2	4
Docomo/SGH	0	7
Hard Rock	0	7
Cell Pro	0	8

BREWERS

From Page 28

inning and the D-9ers nailing only one at the bottom of the first.

A three-run bottom of the fifth gave the D-9ers the momentum, making all their runs off the Brewers' miscues to grab the lead, 4-2. Brewers moved within one 3-4, reaching home plate at the top of the sixth on D-9ers' error and tied the match, 4-all, on Ton Benavente's one-run single in the seventh inning.

Luzama batted seventh with the bases loaded. He hit his target and drove Mark Flores and Manny Tenorio home for the Brewers' 6-4 lead. The Brewers could have made it a 7-4 count after Luzama's double, but Benavente was beaten to third base for the third out. Nonetheless, the Brewers preserved the lead and the win when they allowed only two hits in the last three innings and gave up no runs. The best that the D-9ers could do in the last three innings was reach second base in the eighth inning.

Vince Cepeda pitched in seven innings for the Brewers and recorded six strikeouts. Ed Santos took over at the mound in the last two innings, had one strikeouts and gave up two hits.

2010 Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Settsu Red Impulse's Riki Kaya, left, goes for a layup against Saipan Southern High School's Christian Mizer during their game in the 2010 Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. Southern won, 81-76.

MISO All-Stars' Ezra Caro, left, pulls up for a shot against COPSSA All-Stars' David Kautz. MISO won, 77-74.

COPSSA All-Stars' Luther Taylor, partly hidden, grabs the rebound against three Settsu players. COPSSA won, 67-62.

COPSSA All-Stars' Jared Sablan is tightly guarded by a Settsu defender.

COPSSA All-Stars' Thomas Kautz (16) tries to tap the ball away from Settsu's Hisataka Sakaguchi.

MISO All-Stars' Roxanne Duenas goes for a layup against Settsu defenders. MISO won, 75-54.

COPSSA All-Stars' James Manalo pulls up for a shot against the outstretched arm of Settsu's Kento Kuroda.

FIBA International referee Gabriel White signals while Southern's Christian Mizer, right, and Settsu's Koki Honda prepare for the rebound play.

COPSSA All-Stars' Bo Barry, center, beats two Settsu players for the loose ball.

MISO All-Stars' Lia Rangamar, right, tries to power her way into the paint against a Settsu defender.

Saipan Tribune
Sports

6 junior netters crowned champs

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The first weekend of the 10th Annual PIC Tennis Championships concluded on Sunday on the PIC hard court with six junior players winning their respective divisions.

In the boys U18 division, Christian Miller swept Nathan Nutting in the finals, 6-0, 6-3. It was Miller's second straight championship in the U18 division since moving up to the oldest age group category this season.

In the Coconut Classic last month, Miller won over Rafael Jones in the finals. Miller and Jones had an earlier rematch in last Saturday's PIC tournament with the former prevailing in the semifinals, 6-1, 6-2.

In the other semis pairing, Nathan Nutting outlasted Clay McCullough-Stearns, 6-7 (7-1), 6-4, 5-4 (default). McCullough-Stearns made it to the semis after beating Andy Nutting, 7-6,

See 6 JUNIOR on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Boys U10 division champion Morris Villanueva, left, in action against Luther Lizama, right, during their semis game in the 10th Annual PIC Tennis Championships last Saturday on the PIC hard court.

Brewers beat D-9ers, 6-4

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Brewersnotched their second win after slipping past D-9ers, 6-4, during their game in the 2010 Saipan Major League on Friday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Tony Luzama was struck out in his first three stints at the plate, but blasted a two-run double in the seventh inning to put the Brewers in the lead and eventually gave the team their second victory

Runs were hard to come by for neither team in the first four innings with the Brewers scoring one run apiece in the first and second

See BREWERS on Page 26

Ol' Aces shatter Twins in Majors

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Terson Eina pitched in no relief in six innings, lifting the defending champion Ol'Aces to an 8-2 win over the Twins during their game in the Majors division of the 2010 Saipan Little League Baseball on Sunday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

Eina's steady performance on the mound netted him a record 14 strikeouts in a single game. In the first four innings, he had already struck out 10 batters, allowed only one hit, and gave up no runs. At the bottom of the first inning, he struck out the Twins' first three batters and did the same in the third inning. In the second inning, Eina gave up a single to P.J. Sablan, before striking out the Twins' next three batters.

The Twins then finally broke into the scoreboard, making two runs off

See OL' ACES on Page 26

A Falcons runner prepares to take off toward third base during their game against IT&E in the Major League division of the 2010 Saipan Little League Baseball on Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Aqua outclasses World Resort/Advance

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Aqua Resort Club canned four free throws in the homestretch to pull off an 83-79 win over World Resort/Advance during their game in the 2nd Annual Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball League on Sunday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

Jaymar Torres went 2-for-2, while Gil Gapor and Pedro Lizama split their charities in the last 38 seconds of the game to lift Aqua Resort to the win, its seventh in nine games. With the victory, Aqua Resort now ties World Resort for the second spot in the team standings.

See AQUA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Aqua Resort Club's Pedro Lizama is jammed by the defense of World Resort/Advance players during their game in the Shirley's caging on Sunday at the JP Center Basketball Court.